



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

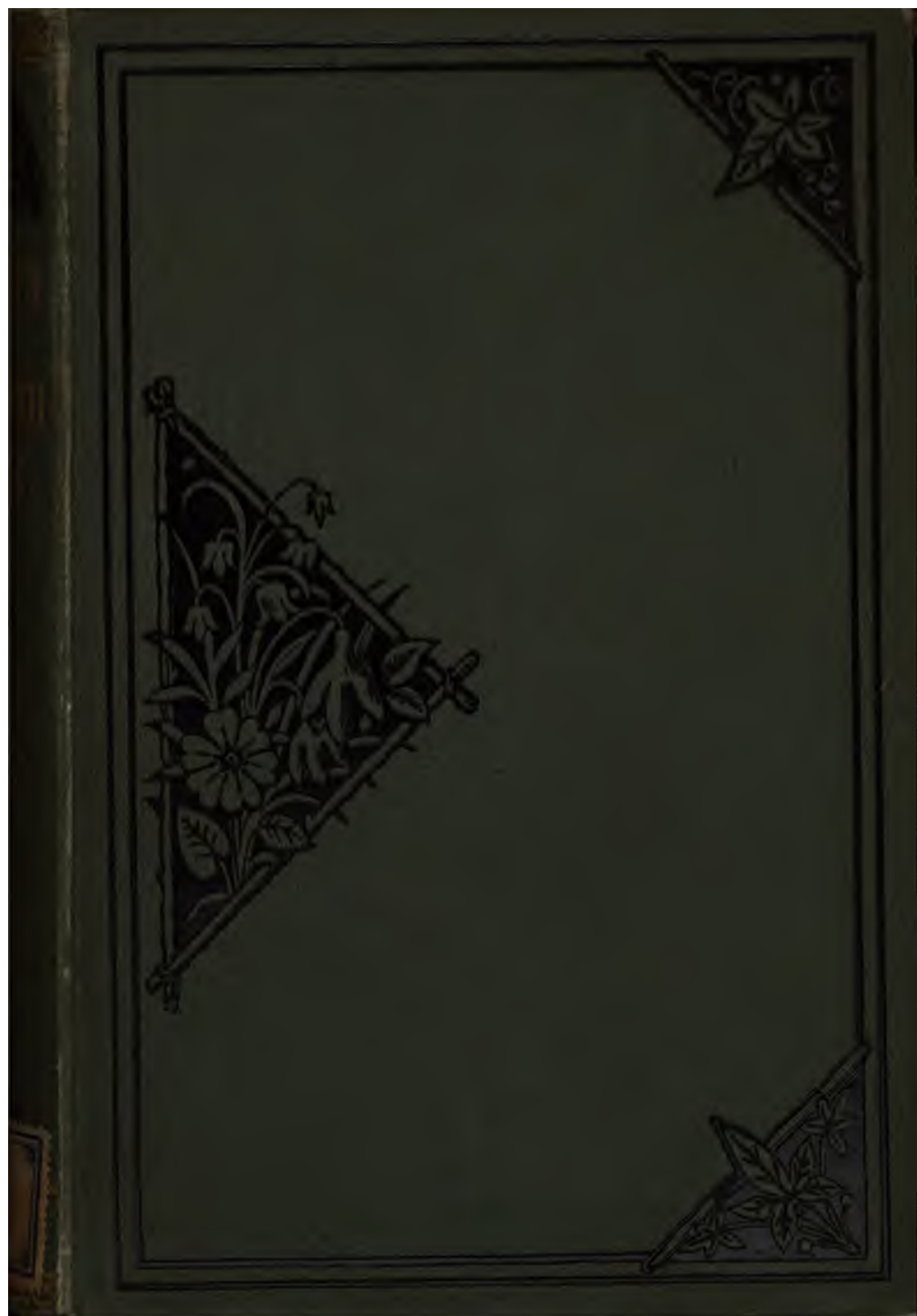
Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>









6000727110

THE DAWN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

A Novel,

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL.

"Be just and fear not ;
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
Thy God's and truth."

IN THREE VOLS.

VOL. I.



London :

REMINGTON AND CO.,
134 NEW BOND STREET, W.

1882.

[All Rights Reserved.]

251. k. 3.

NOTICE.

IF the condition of things narrated in these volumes seems to assume too much the tone and character of prophecy, let it be remembered that conclusions from the processes which are now, and will continue to be, at work in the community and state, must infallibly be reached. We have still near two decades to run before the present century is exhausted. The author desires to show that within that time the course and direction of public affairs may be such, if the country wills it, as will place England on a pinnacle of glory, and in a position of prosperity greater than she has ever, through the whole period of her history, presented to the world. The characters sketched in this work are intended to be typical. They are the results of social combinations arising out of the current events of the time, indicating classes and sections of the community which re-act on passing events, directing and modifying them in various ways and degrees. These reflections will enable any one, moderately acquainted with the politics of the country, to "read between the lines" of these volumes.

CONTENTS OF VOL. I.

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. LIONEL GRANTLEY, ...	1
II. A LOVER'S JEALOUSY UNEXPECTEDLY EXCITED,	14
III. CHANGES, ...	31
IV. LORD NORTHFIELD MAKES A PROPOSAL, .	39
V. NORTHFIELD AND ITS PEOPLE, . . .	62
VI. PHILIP CALVERLEY, ...	77
VII. AN ECCLESIASTICAL DISCOVERY, . .	106
VIII. AN INSTANCE OF ROMAN INFALLIBILITY, .	116
IX. THE POPE'S DECISION, ...	131
X. FURTHER REVELATIONS, ...	144
XI. SOCIABLE AND SHORT, ...	160
XII. MR. WORKINGTON OPENS MORE OF HIS MIND,	168
XIII. ROBERTSON RETURNS TO NORTHFIELD, .	184
XIV. ROSCOTT AND ITS INMATES ARE PERPLEXED, .	191
XV. MR. WORKINGTON VISITS ROSCOTT, . . .	211
XVI. RENT DAY AT NORTHFIELD, ...	228
XVII. UNITY RESTORED IN THE WESTERN CHURCH,	249
XVIII. A FAREWELL, ...	268

"Eternal process moving on,

From state to state the spirit walks,

And these are but the shattered stalks,

Or ruined chrysalis of one."



THE DAWN OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

W

CHAPTER I.

LIONEL GRANTLEY.

LORD NORTHFIELD sat at the breakfast table at his country seat, situated near the now populous town from which he derived his title. Lady Northfield had but a few minutes before withdrawn from the room, and there remained with him his only son, Lionel Grantley, a young man of four or five-and-twenty, who, two or three years before, had gratified his father and sustained the honour of his family by completing at Cambridge an unusually distinguished career.

Lord Northfield regarded his son, as did

many of their friends, as one who would be fitted to take in time a position of influence, and perhaps of eminence, in the House of Commons. The young man was not wanting in ambition, and his academical success proved fully that he was equal to attain any reasonable end at which he might aim. Full of loyalty to the constitution, he desired to serve his country before all things, and was in every way disinclined to settle down into a do-nothing life such as an only son, heir to a title and extensive estates, might be tempted to adopt.

For generations the baron and his family had been staunch and unwavering supporters of constitutional policy. The old nomenclature of parties—Tory, Whig, Radical—had long since died out. Whig and Radical, to sustain as long as possible a liberal party, had merged their insignificant differences, and accepted the appellation of democrats—a title more truly descriptive of their mutual views and aims. Lord Northfield held in his hand a photophonic message which he had just received.

“Any news of the dissolution?” enquired

Lionel. "I see our *Northfield Chronicle* of this morning speaks of it as a foregone conclusion."

"No doubt of the dissolution, but the communication I have is of more importance still," replied Lord Northfield. "Will you credit it? My informant speaks positively of Joseph Workington's resignation, and the consequent certain and speedy breaking up of the administration, who, he says, will not continue in office to wait the result of a general election."

"That's news indeed," said Lionel, "but not altogether unexpected. It has gone the round of the clubs for some time past, but no doubt few believed it. How long has John Freeman been dead? He it was, they say, who kept Workington so long from acknowledging his own convictions.

"I should think some nine or ten years," replied Lord Northfield. "I don't know precisely. But politically he was dead three years before. One forgets when a man's influence and power have gone so long before himself. The mistakes he had made came out conspicuously during the hard times through which the

country passed. His last years were spent, I fancy, in croaking, when he was not either salmon-fishing or at billiards, his two favourite pursuits. He had faded out of the political horizon soon after the downfall of Mr. Glibword's last administration, when they had made such a mess of it in Ireland."

"When was that?" asked Lionel.

"Why, about eighteen or nineteen years ago. You novices in politics could not do better than refresh your memories on such points as these. Glibword had shaken the whole country with his vehement rhetoric, and in his contest at that time for a seat had cap-sized the common-sense of the electors for the occasion all over the kingdom. Lord Tokenham's cabinet, to the surprise of the country, fell all to pieces, and he himself died not many months after. An overwhelming majority was returned of Whigs and Radicals, as they were then called, with a large number of discontented Home Rulers and Land Leaguers for Ireland. But when Glibword had formed his administration, and met the House of Com-

mons, it was found he was obliged to adopt largely his predecessor's policy, except in a few domestic measures of little or no importance, the forcing of which through the Houses at the close of a protracted and unsatisfactory session only increased the discontent already arising in the country. The next session was worse still. Irish obstruction was so persevering that he was obliged to appeal to the Opposition to help him through, and could only carry one Bill in the whole session, for which the wags gave him the sobriquet of 'Coercion Bill.'

"Not a bad hit either," remarked Lionel.
"The name sticks to him still."

"Well," continued Lord Northfield, "he got all wrong in South Africa, as well as Ireland; the Quaker was too much for him, and stopped the fighting in the midst of our reverses. That did not improve matters, you may be sure; and they continued to make a sad hash of the Commercial Treaty with France, and to raise the cry of "Fair Trade against Free Trade."

"What a muddle!" exclaimed Lionel. "Was Joseph Workington in that Cabinet?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Lord Northfield, "that was the first Cabinet in which he served. He was put in to please the Rads in Polinghurst. If you are still serious, Lionel," Lord Northfield remarked after a short pause, "in intending to contest Northfield, you had better look at this letter which came by this morning's mail;" and he tossed the letter across to his son, rising from his chair to leave the room. "I shall be," he said, "in the library all the morning, as I have letters to write. Don't forget that Sir Roderick and his party dine with us to-day."

Lionel, when his father had retired, read and re-read the letter Lord Northfield had given him. "Could its contents be true?" he asked himself, and then hastily thrust the letter into his pocket. If the letter was to be trusted, his father might be better pleased should he avoid embroiling himself with all the discomforts and labour of a contested elec-

tion. Only he felt from his knowledge of Northfield and the constituency that he would, as a Constitutionalist, be pretty safe. But Parliament was not yet dissolved, nor even prorogued. He was therefore not driven to an immediate decision. "How difficult it is, at my age, entering the arena of politics," he began, reflecting within himself, "to learn accurately the history of one's own country during recent preceding years. No books but Statutes of Parliament and files of interminable papers and Blue Books which I have not the patience to examine. My father has taken an active part in politics for the last twenty years, but now he tires of my questions, and sometimes seems puzzled what to say. Since my grandfather was killed in Russia, he has, of course, sat in the House of Lords, so that for the last twenty years or more, not having held any office, he is not, I fancy, quite up to the mark in relation to political events. I want much to know the ins and outs of the administration which followed after Glibword's fall. All that I can get from him is that when Lord Token-

ham died, Lord Saltburn, he says, succeeded to the leadership of the Constitutional party. But, then, that was while Glibword was still in office, and happened, he maintains, in 1881. I well recollect while I was at Eton some years after that, Lord Saltburn was and must have been Prime Minister for some time. He went out of office, I know, the first year I went up to Cambridge, and since then I know pretty well all about it."

"But there must have been," he continued, "more remarkable lines of policy pursued in Lord Saltburn's time, as the country after the muddle in which Mr. Glibword left it, could not be in the settled state in which it now is. Joseph Workington could tell me all that happened. I must ask him the first time we meet. He's a grand fellow, and is willing enough to talk to a youngster. I'm beginning to know him better, and he has always been civil to me since the work we had with poor Doherty. He got out of official rank for some time when Glibword's cabinet fell, and he is said to have been, when he first took office, pledged to de-

mocratic views, which it is affirmed he at that time conscientiously approved. Well, men may and must sometimes change their opinions. I shall ride into Northfield ;” and when he had taken this determination, politics went altogether out of his thoughts. .

Mr. Joseph Workington was deservedly a leading statesman because of his genuine honesty. He was a member of the liberal administration then ruling the nation, and expected to break up. He was of mature age. He had, as a comparatively young man, held a subordinate post during Mr. Glibword’s brief tenure of office, to which reference has been made, after Glibword had unexpectedly thrust Lord Tokenham out of power. During Lord Saltburn’s administration, which followed and lasted some years, Mr. Workington remained in the front bench of the opposition, and was regarded by his colleagues as likely to take high place should his party return to power. It was plainly to be seen that the extravagant views which had, at the urgent instance of Mr. Freeman, commended him to Glibword, and

which he had acquired from the senior member of Polinghurst whose colleague he was, were year by year greatly modified and reduced, and when these two statesmen had passed away at an advanced age, Mr. Workington took for himself a more independent course, and trusted to his own genius for his political guidance.

The democrats had returned to power for a short time, five or six years before the century drew to its close. Workington was essential to their very existence as a political party. Without him no cabinet of them could have been formed. He had not reached the first place and might never do so, but his views were regarded as still liberal enough to allow him to take office. The four or five years of rule which his friends were to enjoy before breaking down in the year following, retaining their places under very impatient sufferance from the House of Commons and the country, were fast coming to an end. Workington from the first had felt himself to be a clog and a discouragement to his party. He was, in fact,

changed, totally changed. He saw and lamented the mistakes into which he had been hurried in the earlier part of his political career. He made no concealment of his altered opinions. He remained in office under strong private protest to his leader, who urged him to consider how certain would be the downfall of the administration should he retire from their ranks. But Workington confessed his full conversion to constitutional opinions, and smarted because entreated not to avow them for the present. His experience and reflection had taught him that England was great and prosperous according as she was strong in her ancient institutions of Church and State. He would brook no attack on them. The first intimation of any intention to assail them should be, he declared, the opportunity he would take to open his mind and relieve his conscience, and make public confession of his altered faith. The crisis came. The leader announced in the cabinet at which all the ministers were present, that he could no longer keep his party together except by attacking the Throne and the Church.

in-
He
of
the best of
if his
sometime
to
taste
if the
a noble
the use of
himself be-
a new order-
the highest
and soon

by a great many
in the history of
Pool,
no
proving

Joseph Workington rose far over a popularity which would have been accorded him had he continued with the democrats.



the
fore all
a natur
er been
ankling

Workington rose in his seat with instant indignation, his face flashing vengeance. He rightly or wrongly accused the premier of breaking faith with him, hardly, in the heat of the moment, seeing the inconsistency of his own position, from which he should sometime previously have shown firmness enough to withdraw. The cabinet separated in haste and confusion. It was the beginning of the end. But before the crash came, in a noble and gracious speech soon after in the House of Commons, Workington vindicated himself before the whole country, and, at once surrendering office, rose everywhere into the highest estimation. The crash was inevitable and soon followed. It had not been by a great many the only marked instance, in the history of political strife, of changed opinions. Peel, Gladstone, Beaconsfield, Derby, to mention no more of recent times in the two preceding generations, had all in time changed their views, their party, and their policy. Here was but another eminent example added to the number. True loyalty and patriotism in

Joseph Workington rose far over a popularity which would have been accorded him had he continued with the democrats.





CHAPTER II.

A LOVER'S JEALOUSY UNEXPECTEDLY EXCITED.

BETWEEN Rushbrooke Hall, the seat of Lord Northfield, and the town which rejoiced in being associated with his title, lay Plashetts, an old Elizabethan mansion, the less pretentious abode of his nearest neighbour, Sir Roderick Norman.

Sir Roderick, like Lord Northfield, was of ancient English race, and for some centuries the estates had remained in the same families.

Sir Roderick was also an extensive Irish proprietor, through the settlements of a great uncle. By visiting his Irish estates every year, he had been enabled in a marked manner to improve the condition of his people. Being wealthy from his English property, he willingly

subsidized, as occasion required, his Irish tenants, and was popular and well-beloved in all the country round. Ireland, through the care and watchfulness of such men, had been fast improving; agrarian crimes for a long time had been unheard of, and discontent was rapidly passing away through the advent of increasing prosperity.

Sir Roderick spent annually two months more or less in Ireland, and in returning a few weeks before from the Green Isle, he had brought with him as a visitor to Plashetts an Irish neighbour, Maurice O'Callaghan, whose estate bordered on his own, in the south-west of Ireland.

Mr. O'Callaghan was of true Irish blood, pure and simple: a travelled man and a gentleman in every respect, but a confirmed hater of English government. Descended, as he professed to be, from Irish kings, and himself the owner of a vast territory, he held before all things that Ireland for the Irish was a natural right. That the country had ever been conquered by the English was a rankling sore in

his heart, continually cropping up, and causing him to identify himself politically with Home Rulers and Land Leaguers. Yet, between Sir Roderick and himself there prevailed the warmest friendship and good will. Sir Roderick good-naturedly bore with his prejudices, humoured them and him, and being close neighbours they became excellent friends. Castlemarten, which owned Mr. Maurice O'Callaghan as its master, extended its broad lands from the Nagles mountains in County Cork to Youghall harbour, and along the coast as far as Poole Head. But between the condition of these two estates of these two proprietors there was the widest difference. Sir Roderick's estate, called the Manor, was managed according to English notions and usages; and the population on it were prosperous, contented and quiet. Mr. O'Callaghan's estate, on the contrary, was managed on true Irish notions and usages; the notions being that the tenants might do much as they liked if they paid their rent, and the usages being to divide and subdivide the land till there was a ragged and

pauper population, out of whom it was difficult at any time to obtain any rent. The population, consequently, was idle, criminal and discontented. When Maurice O'Callaghan came unexpectedly into his inheritance, through the death of his father while hunting, he found his acres, though broad and many, deeply incumbered by his predecessors, and a heavy jointure to be raised for Lady Althæa O'Callaghan, who, on the death of her husband, had determined to reside in Paris with Gertrude, her only daughter, and leave her son at once in full enjoyment of his property.

Maurice O'Callaghan was, at the time we write, well on the right side of thirty, handsome, engaging in manner, but pinched often in his circumstances, though the owner of these vast estates. He had continued single, but was of opinion that he should take a wife could he find a suitable partner and induce her to accept an Irish home; for to leave the inheritance of his fathers, the Irish kings, he could never for a moment think of with patience.

He had now been some weeks under the hos-

pitiable roof of Sir Roderick and Lady Winifred Norman, and it was time he thought he should return to Ireland, but the presence of Marion Norman had too powerful an influence over him to suffer him to take his leave.

Marion Norman was younger than Lionel Grantley by some six years, and from earliest girlhood to womanhood had been in close and constant association with him. They had been like brother and sister, but Lionel's feelings had of late been assuming a warmer character, and it had certainly passed through his mind that Marion might perhaps some day consent to be his wife. It never occurred to him that any other was likely to cross his path in this respect, and he had continued in this fraternal disposition for years without fear. He arrived at Plashetts, and as he drew his horse's rein at the terrace in front of the house, Marion was perambulating with Mr. O'Callaghan, engaged apparently in close and confidential conversation.

"Oh, Lionel," at once said Marion, as her old playfellow pulled up, "what a glorious

morning is this: are you riding into Northfield? Let me order my horse and come with you," and she tripped off to equip, saying, "you can talk with Mr. O'Callaghan, I shall not be long."

Maurice O'Callaghan was in no good humour at this abrupt termination of a delightful tête-à-tête he had enjoyed that morning with Miss Norman. He had been descanting fully on the glories of Ireland, and more particularly of Castlemarten and his own desolate condition since his mother and sister had left him; and he was under the impression that he had made a very pretty and hopeful preface to what he intended to follow, when the unexpected arrival of Lionel Grantley abruptly terminated the conversation.

"Grantley," remarked O'Callaghan, when he had sufficiently recovered from his annoyance, "that's a pretty little nag you're sitting. Does it lape well; or, perhaps, it can't lape at all?"

"Oh, yes, O'Callaghan, it's very good at a fence," said Grantley. "You don't seem to recollect the horse."

"No," said O'Callaghan: "I don't."

"Why, it's one Sir Roderick brought from Ireland last year. It came out of your own stables, and Sir Roderick gave it me."

Now, Maurice O'Callaghan was fairly nettled at this, and felt himself getting both angry and confused. His stud, with the exception of one or two horses he retained, had been brought to the hammer through some temporary pressure the year before, and he found that this fact must have been known to Grantley from the circumstance of his being the possessor of this horse. To help him out of his confusion, fortunately at this moment Marion appeared habited in her riding suit, and she was quickly in her saddle and off with Grantley.

As they rode away, Sir Roderick came out and saluted his young neighbour. "Off to Northfield, I suppose," said Sir Roderick. "When did you return from London? Don't you feel, Lionel, as if the world was coming to an end now that we are beginning the last year of this century? It makes me feel as if I, with my old bones, should have said my adieu long ago."

Sir Roderick was a man in his very prime, full of vigour and life.

"So you mean, Lionel," continued Sir Roderick, "to contest Northfield, your father tells me. I shan't stand again. Was town very full? Come back to luncheon. Lady Winifred will want to know all the news and about the latest gaieties, and I daresay Marion won't object to your company. Don't ride too far. I don't like the child fatigued, and we all dine at Rushbrooke to-night, and my neighbour, O'Callaghan, leaves us to-morrow."

"I only want to call on Thompson," observed Lionel, "and tell him if he means to act as my agent he must at least have five or six to help him. I don't mean to be beaten for want of powder."

"Well, off with you then," said Sir Roderick, "but be back in good time; and mind, none of your unmeaning constitutional nonsense. Speak out like a good old Tory, true as steel, and tell the people you're staunch for Church and State. If you don't, no help from me; and, what's more, I'll work against you."

Ha, ha! Now, be off. I'll give you till two o'clock," he added, pulling out his watch.

The young people rode away. Maurice O'Callaghan stared vacantly after them, wondering what the future would produce, and feeling, as he was to depart on the morrow, he had hardly made sufficient use of the time he had spent at Plashetts. But then, he had forgotten all about Lionel, who had been in London all the time eating his dinners at the Temple.

Marion Norman and Lionel Grantley were fast friends, and could hardly be called lovers, as they had grown up from childhood, as already described. The event of to-day had quickened Lionel's feelings. He had never asked Marion to be his wife. He had been so closely and continually associated with her that it had never occurred to him they could ever be separated. There was a truth and depth in their affection for each other, but on the part of neither had love as yet been confessed. They derived no pleasure from mere complimentary or frivolous speech, and

they never had recourse to it, and flirtation was out of the question. They were, in fact, as we have said, fast friends; but Lionel now felt that his peace of mind was involved, and that this fascinating, handsome Irishman, though almost broken down in his estate, had more than disturbed his self-confidence and equanimity.

Lionel and Marion rode off in the highest spirits. The day was unusually fine, and they had at least two full hours before them. It was weeks since they had met, owing to Lionel's absence in London.

"Why do you go to that horrid London?" broke out Marion. "I can't see the least use in your being a barrister, and we've lost no end of nice rides. You go up you say to eat your dinners, and after you have eaten them you're to be 'called.' But, you know, you'll never practise at the bar. Only poor men who must earn their living do that, and as you have plenty, it would be cruel to take briefs which would help some who have none. All this beautiful weather we have lost, and we seem to

be quite getting out of the way of riding together as we used to do."

"Well, Marion," observed Lionel, "you are quite right; I do not mean to practise, even if I thought I could successfully do so. But I hope by reading for the bar to become better acquainted with constitutional law, and the political history of our country, and thus be fitted for the seat I want to get in Parliament. You would not like me to go there an ignoramus, to sit still in some back bench where noodles gather, and never open my lips. Besides, I hold it true that every man, whatever his rank or fortune, should have a profession. I really could not, for instance, go on idling life away, and to no purpose, like Maurice O'Callaghan."

"Oh, I'm sorry for Mr. O'Callaghan," interposed Marion Norman; "he was telling me this morning all his troubles and misfortunes, and how lonely he felt at Castlemarten, except when father and mother were at the Manor, and he returns to Ireland to-morrow."

Lionel was touched to the quick. He knew

that "pity was akin to love," and he could almost hear his heart beat. Was he jealous? O'Callaghan had had the field open to him all the time he was in London. What use had he made of it? Had he proposed and been accepted? That could hardly be, or Marion would not have joined him so hastily when he arrived on horseback. Yes, she had hastily expressed her wish to accompany him, so perhaps O'Callaghan had proposed and been rejected, and hence her quick determination to get away. Were either conjecture true, nothing, Lionel felt, would be more imprudent or inopportune than to urge his own suit at such a moment. He must still be patient, and bear the fears which had been excited, and which quite oppressed him. He looked at Marion, but he could divine nothing from those clear blue eyes, which looked on him with the same sisterly affection he had so long experienced.

They had reached Northfield and Mr. Thompson's house. He was at home. Lionel dismounted and gave his horse's rein to the

groom, leaving Marion for a few minutes while he ascended the stairs.

"Mr. Lionel," said the old lawyer, "your father's influence in the borough is well nigh paramount, but the people are one and all, and for some years have been, averse to change. The improvements in their condition have been very much the work of the late Tory Cabinet, which remained in power so long, and they scarcely understand what is meant by constitutional views. They want definite statements which they can comprehend and appreciate. They must be able to distinguish them from the democratic views of the present Cabinet, who have tried lately to upset so much. Make up your mind to speak out for Church and State if you are to succeed Sir Roderick, who, you know well, sticks to his principles and the country, and for those reasons has always been popular and at the head of the poll. I see Miss Marion is with you: so I must not detain you. I will secure as many assistants as you and your committee may deem advisable, as soon as we know for

certain that Parliament will be dissolved, and the new writs are issued. But think twice before you declare yourself a Constitutionalist, which people may not understand. If you mean Church and State say so, and that to the backbone you are for them—say so in plain English. The larger word may mean all right, but I fear it may be misunderstood or doubted. Pleasant day: good morning.”

The ride back to Plashetts was soon accomplished. Lionel was full of his future, and the preparations he was making for it, but he avoided speaking directly the words of love. Was he wise?

“My mind will not let me rest, Marion,” he went on. “Are we not sent into the world for some purpose? Life to one without purpose would be valueless. Soon we shall be acting in a new century. ‘Old things are passing away,’ and it is time all things were becoming ‘new.’ Let me be ready to take my part in the consolidation of my country, shaken as it has been in late years by statesmen whose patriotism could never get beyond

party ties; and I shall feel that my life, long or short, will not be wasted. I quite overflow with unspeakable happiness at the glorious prospect."

Marion was full of admiration for her companion, but said nothing. She would not interrupt the flow of his thoughts which from her childhood she had been accustomed to hear him deliver. They had played together in days not long past; they had loitered together by the murmuring brook beneath the alder trees in the heat of summer. They had grown up together; but there was still the feeling, not yet confessed, of which Marion he could not be sure was sensible, while he himself was being devoured by it. To restrain the declaration of his passionate love was a difficulty with which he felt he must contend; and he suppressed it this time with success.

At luncheon every one appeared in the highest spirits. Lionel had to make an effort to be gay. Marion was bright with the roses of her youth. Maurice O'Callaghan was clever with his compliments and truly Irish playful-

ness. Lady Winifred was glad to see Lionel again after his absence in London. She had known him so long and so intimately from his earliest childhood, that she missed him when he was away. Still some years from middle age, she resembled more her daughter's sister than mother. Of highest birth herself, a daughter of the Duke of Oldcastle, she had transmitted to her children all the grace and beauty of her own extraction. Sir Roderick twitted Lionel on his constitutionalism, and asked him what he meant. Maurice O'Callaghan remarked that the Irish were every year getting more *mane sperited*. They never heard now of Home Rule or the Land Leaguers. Years had passed since any one had been shot in open day, or detected in an agrarian crime. Juries, he said, now convicted the patriots who at one time they always acquitted. Lionel said little, but laughed heartily as the conversation flowed merrily along. As he rose after a time reluctantly to go, though they were all to meet at dinner, he felt he was leaving Marion at the mercy of the Irishman, with the

field still open to him for a few more hours. He was half sorry he had not spoken his mind and told his love; but at the same time fell back on the conviction that he had done wisely in remaining silent, and as he rode off Sir Roderick and Marion stood at the door waving him a farewell.

"Now mind, Grantley," shouted Sir Roderick, "none of your constitutional nonsense. I'll put a spoke in your wheel unless you profess yourself for Church and State, and say so with plainness of speech."





CHAPTER III.

CHANGES.

THE last year of the present century dawned upon England amidst hurry, noise and confusion; but it was the commotion and excitement naturally resulting from prospects of a character unusually bright and important which occupied the public mind.

It was the 1st of January, 1900.

The day was fine. Old-fashioned winters were remembered only by the middle-aged. The climate had been altering much for some years past, and becoming more temperate. Philosophers ascribed the improvement to the approaching completion of another geological cycle, the changes which had been accumulat-

ing through a long period of time producing the result.

It seemed strange to men to begin to date their letters 1900 ! Full as it was of novelty, it was proportionately exciting. When the year would have run its course, a new century would have been opened. Who would live these few months to reach this epoch, was a reflection passing through every one's mind. Young and old for the moment were occupied by this thought. It was the topic of the pulpit. It was the subject of conversation everywhere with friends when they met and had given the daily salutation. For a time, the Englishman's common-place remarks upon the weather, unusual as the season was, were omitted. Anticipations appropriate to the event absorbed the imagination. Was the world on the verge of some crisis, though years as ever had rolled smoothly on, as in the time of every preceding generation ?

Those who had reached, or were approaching, old age, had lived in a period of revolution, in which changes in England and throughout

Europe, affecting the whole world, had been wrought, here in a quiet and peaceable manner comparatively, yet in an extensive, thorough, and decided way, differing from all former experiences.

Education of the masses made compulsory by the State, about five-and-twenty years before, had raised every class to a sense of its own rights, and every man to a knowledge of his own dignity. The population, from being rough, coarse, and but little removed from barbarism, had become polished, reasonable, and tractable, though still brimful of independence. If the lower classes maintained their own rights and relations with the State, they recognised that the classes which wealth and property had placed above them in the social scale, were as justly entitled to the possession and enjoyment of their rights and privileges as any of the remaining sections of the community. Feelings of jealousy and envy with regard to the high found no place in the public mind, if still individual instances of this morbid disposition might be met with here and there.

Wise regulations respecting land more than legislation of a direct nature, were beginning to prevail and encourage proprietors of vast estates, accumulated during preceding generations, to admit readily those who desired agrarian settlement to a participation in the cultivation of the soil without injury to the owner, had been a sufficient time in operation to show the sagacity which had devised so sound a system.

In commerce and in the manufacturing communities, regulations securing an equitable arrangement in respect of profits, had been long adopted with results of a most satisfactory character. Principles of co-operation had come to be thoroughly understood, were working vigorously everywhere, and producing a common prosperity. Poor laws had been gradually but long abolished as needless, through the absence of the poverty and destitution out of which they had grown in former years.

With the termination of the brief but bitter Victorian persecution, the Church had gained her ancient rights and liberties; and a Parlia-

ment with its House of Commons content to embrace men of every creed and opinion; had recognized the equity of ceasing to legislate independently in ecclesiastical matters.

The Bishop of Rome, resuming his first position of a simple prelate of the Western Church, had drawn closely the ties which now bind together the Catholic communities throughout the world, and having at last repudiated the detestable and novel decree of papal infallibility, had discovered that the bull ex-communicating Queen Elizabeth and her people, was intended by its author to have been restricted to the period and reign in which it was passed.

The Roman schism in England had come consequently to a natural termination. Its priests and people had been gradually absorbed into the Anglican communion, and as a result of this happier situation, the nonconformists generally had reconsidered their position and accepted episcopal rule, under provisions for a wide toleration of difference in ritual and practice.

The House of Lords which had wisely and courageously stood between the House of Commons and the country in reference to many extravagant and unwise measures propounded some twenty years before, rested more firmly than ever in the affections of the people, who deemed the peers a part of themselves, though a distinct class, and having as much claim to the enjoyment of their privileges and rank as any other section of the community.

Contentment, the consequence of prosperity, developed a mutual esteem and affection among men, which everywhere prevailed.

It was something indeed to have lived to the year 1900, and to have seen how wise measures and good policy had produced these glorious results.

The federation of Europe, brought about by the wisdom and firmness of English statesmen, had long since reduced the huge standing armies of the Continent, and at the same time dissipated all apprehensions of war.

The subdivision of Russia and Turkey into

provinces embracing the several nationalities of the East, and extending over all of them equally the protecting power of the same confederation, had fully operated to the settlement of the Eastern Question, and the pacification of those too long and suffering countries of Eastern Europe, which, while the concert only of the great powers continued, had proved to be the source of constant political difficulty and disagreement. Federation between all the nations of Europe had entirely mended and reformed all this; and England, elected unanimously by the united powers to the presidency of this federation, practically ruled the nations and the destinies of the world.

Every empire, kingdom, and state in this glorious compact retained its own individuality and national government; but the union of all had made the general peace secure and the advancement of the world towards a higher civilization both insured and conspicuous.

In England at this time and under this condition of things, a general election was im-

pending. A change of administration was believed to be imminent. Out of this arose the commotion and excitement which for years had not been so keenly felt or experienced in the public mind.

The new year, the last of the nineteenth century, was evidently to be a marked year in the history of our country.





CHAPTER IV.

LORD NORTHFIELD MAKES A PROPOSAL.

LIONEL GRANTLEY returned to Rushbrooke Hall under the influence of many contending feelings. He consoled himself that before many hours had expired he would again see Marion, as the whole of the Plashetts party, as we have already seen, were expected to dinner that evening. It is true they would be accompanied by Maurice O'Callaghan, but he felt the opportunity would be a good one to scrutinize closely the Irishman's deportment towards Marion, and probably would enable him to satisfy himself whether any impressions had been made by the visitor on Marion's feelings. But he was doomed to disappointment.

When the Plashetts party arrived, they came without Marion; and Lady Winifred excused her daughter's absence to Lady Northfield with the customary feminine apology of a headache.

Maurice O'Callaghan appeared in his usual high spirits; if anything, he was even still gayer and more volatile than ever. Had he made a successful declaration? was a question which at once darted through Lionel's mind, and stung him to the quick. And did this account for Marion's absence?

To describe the mental torture he was enduring was impossible. How he blamed himself for not availing himself of numberless opportunities he had enjoyed to ascertain from Marion the state of her feelings, and reveal his own. What a fool he had been to take all as a matter of course, and to have believed that Marion and he had been quietly drifting into the happy condition of an engaged couple! He may have lost her, he thought, for ever. O'Callaghan, an old friend of the family, who had seen Marion frequently in her girlhood

during the annual visits of the family to the manor, had, in his single stay at Plashetts for a few weeks, won, it seemed, the woman on whom he had not only set all his affection, but whom he had never once thought could be by any means separated from his life and fortunes. This was a trial heavier than he could bear. Perhaps, if it were as he conjectured, Lady Winifred would make Lady Northfield acquainted with it, and though his mother had long known Lionel to be a great admirer of Marion, she did not know he was so far gone in devotion to her god-child as to make marriage with her indispensable to his happiness. But Lady Winifred, he discovered in the course of the evening, had said nothing. Altogether, he was in a miserable plight, and, moreover, did not feel at all sure that he had successfully concealed his feelings.

Fortunately for him, his father attributed his unusual reserve and lack of spirits, which were in such marked contrast to the mercurial volubility of the Irishman, to a totally different cause.

When Lionel had returned from Plashetts in the middle of the day, he found his father in the library. Lord Northfield had been looking for him, for he had a proposal to make of which Lionel had received as yet not the slightest intimation.

"Do I interrupt you, father?" said Lionel as he entered; "shall I disturb you if I stay?"

"No, not in the least, don't go," replied Lord Northfield. "I have just this letter to finish, and shall then be glad to talk, for I have been looking for you to come in."

In a few minutes, Lord Northfield was free, and, turning to Lionel, he enquired if he had seen Mr. Thompson.

"Oh yes," answered Lionel, glad to have his thoughts diverted from the subject which had so oppressed him. "He promised to secure for me all the assistance I wanted as soon as the expected dissolution should take place."

"Did you read the letter I gave you?" asked Lord Northfield.

"I see," replied Lionel, "that your corres-

pendent believes the Premier will endeavour to reconstruct his Cabinet. He wants, if he can, to rap Workington's knuckles."

"Any way, he doubts," observed Lord Northfield, "that, if the Cabinet were broken up to-morrow, whether Workington would come into power. He is not likely to be called to form an administration. Though he seems thoroughly to have renounced the Democratic party, with their reckless and extravagant views; the Tories, or, as you call them, the Constitutional party, would hardly be disposed as yet to accept him as a leader; and, moreover, if there be an immediate change of Ministry, it does not follow that a dissolution and general election will ensue. It is more than probable that, at any rate for a time, the new administration, if there is to be one, would try and work with the present House. Workington and those who think with him could be reckoned on with certainty."

"Well," observed Lionel, glad to talk politics and forget Maurice O'Callaghan, "as yet the Opposition has had no more than this

single experience of Workington, and there are too many old and wise heads to trust him all at once. A man who has once changed his opinions may change them again. A leader must enjoy the full confidence of his party."

"No, I don't think Workington will change again," Lord Northfield added. "He has reached his present views and position by no means precipitately, but thoughtfully and after much deliberation; and no one who has watched his political career closely, as I must admit I have done, will be of the opinion that he is a man of infirm will. His political bias with which he entered into public life was to be accounted for by his close association with his two colleagues of that three-cornered borough, I mean Freeman and Muffit. He could hardly cut himself loose at once from the influence of those men."

"Did he show signs then," enquired Lionel, "in the early part of his career, of impatience under their yoke? Of course, I know he did later on."

"I always think he did, more or less," said

Lord Northfield. "I was for a short time with him in the house before your grandfather's death, and from what I saw of him then and since, I considered him a man of far greater capacity than either of them. You have seen something of him since, and must have formed some opinion of his powers in the business with which you were fortunate enough to associate him with you. With all his radicalism, there was below it the impulses of a sincere patriot, and, if I was right in my measure of him, he was just the man to take a line for himself, which we see he has done."

"I am glad to hear all this, father, of Workington," said Lionel. "I seem to know him better than ever from what you say. Certainly, I could form none but most favourable impressions from the short intercourse I had with him at the time to which you refer."

"I often at that time conversed with him," continued Lord Northfield, "on the opinions of the day; and though he never made any great protestations, one could see he had the welfare of his country at heart, and that if

grave constitutional questions arose he might be among the first who would fling democracy over. He was almost always something feared in the Cabinet, and, therefore, most patted on the back by his leader."

"The democrats in my view," observed Lionel, "are really used up. I gathered that the evening I spent with Workington at the Reform, though he, of course, would say but little before a youngster, and our business was not politics as you know."

"Well, there are not any of the old abuses," continued Lord Northfield, "requiring reform, which produced the liberal party in my younger days, or, indeed, in the generation before me. These abuses have long been swept away, with the exclusive privileges which some sections of the community enjoyed. We have free trade; we have what really amounts to universal suffrage, for every man who will work for it can make for himself a vote; we have no special subsidies of any kind. Unless the liberals invent reforms, what is there left to reform? To my own mind inventing re-

forms, which are not patent and needed, is to prepare measures of destruction, and I should not be surprised that this is what Workington saw and was decided by it to take up an independent position."

"I gathered almost as much," said Lionel, "even from the little intercourse I had with him."

"Men may go sometimes too fast," Lord Northfield went on, "in legislation as in other things. We may rectify this and that so much that we may improve our constitution off the face of the earth. For the sake of keeping a party together, this has been too much the practice of liberal leaders; and a clog on the chariot wheels of the State has often been found useful where danger is apparent, and without it we may run so fast down hill that we may turn over. So you do mean to stand for Northfield, as Sir Roderick retires?"

"I have that ambition, dear father," replied Lionel. "I think the House of Commons the finest arena in which a man can be a combatant. You come to encounter there the

highest intellect the country can produce, the most eloquent, the most patriotic. What finer opening can a man desire? What more glorious opportunity if you wish to serve your country?"

"Should my correspondent be correct in what he states in the letter I gave you," continued Lord Northfield, "there will be no chance for you, Lionel, for another year, or perhaps eighteen months. You are to be called to the bar after next term, that is very shortly. You have completed your residence, and the call is now a matter of course. In the interval, while waiting to contest Northfield, what do you propose to do with yourself? You are not the man, I think, to waste eighteen months."

"I have really not thought of it," replied Lionel. "My notion of contesting Northfield annihilated all interval. My mind has been intently fixed on it, and it never occurred to me there might be delay."

"There seems, you see," said Lord Northfield, "every probability. My correspondent is not likely to be misinformed. You observe

he writes from the Home Office, where he has long been an irremovable Under-Secretary, and being an old personal friend of mine, not to say connection, we frequently write to each other."

"Certainly," remarked Lionel, "if the Premier, on Workington's withdrawal, intends to try and re-model his Cabinet, there must be delay; but if there should be a general turn out of the administration, and many new members were introduced, are not the chances great that an immediate general election would be unavoidable?"

"No doubt, in the case you suppose," said Lord Northfield, "but I have not heard it conjectured that any more screws are loose, and if the Premier likes to try to hold together a little longer, there is nothing to prevent him from filling up Workington's place from the House of Lords, and so avoid any election and the public expression of opinion which an election entails."

"That would be a skilful bit of tactics," said Lionel, laughing heartily, "but he is likely to

be foiled in trying to find a suitable ultra-radical in the Upper House."

"It is a common custom when an administration is breaking up," remarked Lord Northfield, "that the Premier is permitted to name a few new peers before quitting office. He might name the peers, get them created, and cling for a while to office, notwithstanding."

"That," ejaculated Lionel in an emphatic tone, "would be very unscrupulous: a most tricky and unbecoming act on the part of any minister of the crown."

"But men when they are hard pushed," continued Lord Northfield, "are often guilty of unscrupulous things which they know they cannot justify. If they succeed, they get the credit from their party of having done a clever thing. His party would support him in it from love of their places. Why, I have heard it said that he was prepared, if all else failed him, to get a radical priest made bishop and clap him into the cabinet."

Lionel treated this as one of his father's jokes. "But," Lord Northfield added, "though

it is centuries since bishops made part of an administration, I really don't see any possible objection to reviving the usage."

"Just so," said Lionel, "but I am leading you far from the point on which you were speaking, what I should do with myself if there be this interval of expected delay?"

"Well, then," asked Lord Northfield, "have you any plan of your own?"

"None whatever," replied Lionel; "I never thought of this occurring."

"I don't want you to determine without sufficient consideration," continued Lord Northfield, "but I wish my son, when he enters the House of Commons, to go there with every advantage."

"Yes,—"

"And my proposal is, if it meet your views, that you should use this interval to go abroad. Though you travelled somewhat during your Cambridge vacations, you never went very far, or could remain long enough to find much advantage from it. I should like you first to go through Paris to Italy and Rome, which you

have never seen. In Rome you might make a convenient stay, your uncle and god-father, you know, being there as *Chargé d'Affaires*. This would delight your mother and gratify your uncle who has not seen you since you were a child, and he hardly ever omits asking after you when he writes to us. If you had time and the election be still deferred, I should very much like you to go into the provinces which have been wrested from Russia and Turkey, and are rejoicing in their national independence. I will take care, in such a case, that you have to carry with you letters of introduction to the ministers at all the Courts, and letters of credit you shall also have suitable to your position, as liberal as you can desire. What say you? "

"Indeed," replied Lionel, looking serious after all his father had said, "I feel sure I should like it, and it would be singular if I did not profit by it. But if the election came on, and I was away somewhere in Asia Minor, my chance, which to me seemed so near, would be gone."

“Not a bit of it,” ejaculated Lord Northfield, “not a bit of it. I would have you back in a jiffey. A photo-phonograph should be despatched without delay, and in a week or ten days you might be home. The Euphrates Valley Railway, which we are making and is to be relied on, would bring you to the Levant from any part of Asia Minor in a few days; thence to England is plain sailing and speedy enough. Besides, we should know for certain three weeks or a month before, when the dissolution was determined on, and the writs for the election could not be issued in much less than about the same interval. You may go if you like with perfect security. I shall not neglect your interests.”

Lionel paused before replying. His heart was full of the occurrences which had happened so unexpectedly in the morning. He was thinking of Marion. If he left for the time contemplated, could he be sure of her? How to resolve this he knew not. “May I sleep on it, father?” at length he said, “and tell you in the morning.”

"By all means," rejoined Lord Northfield, and they parted till dinner.

As the dinner hour approached, Lionel was all anxiety to greet Marion, and he had made up his mind, if an opportunity could be opened at some time in the evening, to talk more definitely to her, and open his heart. But we have seen how in this respect he came to be disappointed.

O'Callaghan rattled on all dinner time, told them his plans, said he had made up his mind to take a wife to Castlemarten, as he could bear his solitude no longer, that he should go back to Cork for a short time to see Mr. Sharpnose, his solicitor and agent, to ascertain his exact position, and after that proceed at once to Paris to see his mother and sister, and announce to them his intentions.

All this time poor Lionel sat on thorns. It was then, he thought, a settled thing, and perhaps his father had generously and thoughtfully devised his proposed round of travel that he might become reconciled to his loss.

But Lord and Lady Northfield had never

been absolutely told by their son what his feelings were in this matter. They had formed their conclusions from observation, but had prudently kept their conjectures to themselves.

Lionel hoped he might be mistaken, but he regarded things as decidedly against him, because O'Callaghan had so openly spoken in the presence of them all of his determination to marry, as if he had already settled who his wife was to be, and who could it be, he argued with himself, but Marion Norman, with whom he had been in daily intercourse for some weeks, whom he had himself seen that very morning in close conversation with her, and who, it came out, had been for hours closeted with her father?

Lionel, in great distress of mind under these reflections, and with his nerves strung to the highest pitch, resolved to try that very evening to extract from his mother whether or not there was any foundation for his fears. He little thought how, in venturing on such a topic, he was certain, in his present frame of mind, completely to betray his whole secret,

and the love he had long cherished for Marion. He must run that risk, for he could no longer bear the strain.

The little party broke up at an early hour, on the plea that Maurice O'Callaghan had to take an early train in the morning, and Lord Northfield retired to his study, leaving Lionel and his mother together.

"Come into your boudoir, mother," began Lionel, "it's early yet, and I want to tell you the proposal my father has made me to-day."

"Oh, he has then spoken to you, dear Lionel," rejoined Lady Northfield; "what do you think of it?"

"Well, come away," continued Lionel, "and let us chat it over," and he put his arm through his mother's, and they passed into the boudoir.

Closing the door behind them, Lionel threw himself into an easy arm-chair close to the one he knew it was his mother's custom to occupy, and he fairly groaned.

"Why, dear boy, what's the matter?" enquired Lady Northfield in a tender and

compassionating voice, suspecting at once what the trouble was.

Lionel knew not how to commence. He began bungling something about his father's proposal, and that it had taken him by surprise; but a mother's sympathies and a woman's penetration were not thus to be evaded.

"No, Lionel; no, dear," said Lady Northfield, "you're in trouble because you must leave Marion."

Lionel felt he had betrayed himself, but having done so, he must take advantage of the occasion, and discover if possible whether his impressions were well founded or not. He could control himself no longer.

"Oh, mother," he exclaimed, almost choking and moved nearly to tears, which he had with difficulty suppressed all the evening. "Oh, mother, is it really then a settled thing that Maurice O'Callaghan is to marry Marion?"

Lady Northfield hesitated. "You must know, dear mother," continued Lionel, for he could no longer restrain himself, "how long and how deeply I have loved Marion. I would

rather know the worst than suffer this horrible suspense."

"My dear boy, your father and I have long perceived this," at length Lady Northfield spoke. "But you have never, I think, made any proposal of marriage to her. You have been fast friends, we know; you have been for years like brother and sister, as we could not but see. If you have not spoken to Marion—"

"No, I have not," interposed Lionel, feeling he had better speak out fully; "fool that I have been. I have been taking all things as a matter of course, never contemplating for a moment that any one would cross my path. It never entered my thoughts. Marion seemed mine. I have acted as if I assumed she was, and that time only was needed to see me settled in life with her for my bride. Oh, misery that this is! It was good of father to think of diverting my mind from this great sorrow by the proposal he has made; but it cannot be: my future seems blasted; all looks black, black!"

"My darling child," said Lady Northfield, quickly; "I think you are precipitate. Lady

Winifred did not say that Maurice has actually proposed for Marion. She told me he had been closeted with Sir Roderick up to the very moment of dressing to come here, and that she had not heard more than that O'Callaghan had opened to Sir Roderick the whole budget of his affairs, and that it is by his advice that he returns to Cork to see his agent before going to Paris on his promised visit to Lady Althæa and his sister."

"But you think, mother, my hope is gone?"

"Dear boy, I know not what to think," replied Lady Northfield. Marion, like all girls, would require winning. Friendship is not love. When young people have been brought up together, as you and she have, in the same associations for years, almost like members of the same family, the thought of marriage is not the first which enters a girl's mind. She would need distinct expression of a high love and devotion to win her heart, before she would indeed know from one who is no stranger that more than friendship is intended. Your error seems to have been that you have overlooked

this. Unless, however, she is absolutely pledged to Maurice O'Callaghan, you need not despair."

"Oh, mother," interrupted Lionel, "I begin to hope again—"

"Hear me to the end, dear boy," continued Lady Northfield. "Go, as your father proposes, but before you go, make an opportunity to speak to Marion yourself. Your own sense of delicacy must teach you that for your father or myself to broach the subject in any way to Lady Winnifred or Sir Roderick is impossible. We know not what their views for Marion may be. They are dear and tried friends, and were it settled that Marion and you were to be man and wife, I feel sure no impediment would be put in the way by either of them. But Maurice O'Callaghan may have either made, or be intending to make, an offer when he has looked into his affairs. Castlemarten is said to have a rent roll, when times are good, of forty thousand a year, and is it likely that an offer to share this would be refused? My instincts, however, tell me that nothing is settled, and you, by direct communication with Marion, are the one who

should ascertain this. You can easily make an opportunity to speak fully with her. Maurice leaves Plashetts to-morrow morning. What is to hinder you to ride over in the morning, as you so frequently have done, and with your father's proposal in your mind, tell her you are going abroad, and all you want to discover will naturally come out? "

"Mother, I am resolved; my courage will not fail me. I shall accept my father's offer. It is both generous and opportune. If Marion is free to receive me henceforward as her acknowledged lover, I can trust her while I am away; if I have lost her, through failing to tell my love soon enough, then travel will be my best solace. Let me go with the heavy weight on my heart, and pray and struggle with it, that my life, even with this bereavement, may still not be without an aim."

"Courage, courage, my son," said Lady Northfield. "Have faith in the future. All may yet turn out well. Good night."



CHAPTER V.

NORTHFIELD AND ITS PEOPLE.

THE flourishing town of Northfield lay along one of those lovely valleys we find in the west riding of Yorkshire. Fifty years or so had converted it from a small insignificant village into a populous and prosperous town, with a hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants.

Trade and manufactures had effected this extraordinary change. Textile fabrics formed the leading employment of the people, but trade with its endless variety of commodities supplying the continuous necessities of a large and thriving population, was active in all departments, and gave occupation to large numbers in every quarter of the town.

The tradesmen were men of capital, which they had enlarged by successful operations on the spot. They had the proverbial acuteness of the Yorkshireman, and seldom stumbled in their transactions. More than one had realized good fortunes, and were by no means niggard in the use of what they had amassed. Many of them could associate on equal terms with the millowners of the place, and inter-marriages between the two classes had of late years become common, chiefly in consequence of the advanced education which for some time had been appreciated by those sections of the community. They had the ways and manners of the gentry of fifty years before. The daughters were well-informed and highly cultivated young women, fitted to become good wives and mothers in the class to which they belonged, and with their good looks and their bright and winning ways were appreciated wherever they went. The young men too enjoyed all the advantages of the time. It was no exception to find in the offices of the mills, or in the counting-houses of the larger merchants and

co-operative stores, clerks who had taken their degree with distinction at one of the universities, to which they had resorted for the sake of real cultivation, and with no intention whatever of discarding the trade followed by their fathers.

The intercourse of the young people in the town throughout these classes was consequently of a polished and gentle kind. Men who were old enough to remember the manners of fifty years before were equally surprised and gratified by the advance which had been made in true civilization.

The old village church of Northfield, which had been a parish time out of mind, and round which the town had grown up, radiating from it in every direction, stood conspicuous in the market place. It was an ancient edifice, interesting not merely from its antiquity, but for the beauty of its proportions, and the amplitude of its dimensions. Its spire was to be seen everywhere for miles around, and the roof of its nave, overtopping considerably some of the loftiest mills in the place, indicated how it had been erected by no niggard hand.

Years before the time of which we are writing, in the earlier part of Queen Victoria's reign, when church building and restoration was so extensively in vogue, the Church of Northfield in all its parts had undergone a thorough re-instatement under the direction of an eminent architect of the time. It was at the cost of the grandfather of the present Lord Northfield that the restoration was undertaken and carried through; and the parish having enjoyed, through the care and piety of the noble patrons, as son succeeded in title to the father, a succession of active and earnest vicars, the church was an object of love and reverence among the people long before the recent unification of Christendom.

On a market-day you would see the women, coming from the country with their baskets of eggs and butter, pass a few minutes of devotion within the church before proceeding to dispose of their commodities. From week's end to week's end, during daylight, were the doors open for any one who would use it, and the daily offering was made without intermission.

Throughout the town, populous and busy as it was, an air of quietness and sobriety prevailed which at once announced to the passer by that he was in the midst of a Christian community. Cheerfulness was written in every face. The people saluted one another with good humour and good grace. No riot was to be seen, no disorder, no turmoil or derangement. Such, indeed, were the improved ways and manners of all English towns at this period; Northfield was no exception, but simply a good illustration of the towns and people throughout the country.

"So we're to have an election, neighbour," said Mr. Talbot, as he entered the exchange, to his intimate friend Mr. Robertson who was standing on the steps.

"I had heard the news," replied Robertson, "and came here to look for you. We return three members now, and surely you will consent to stand as I have so often with others urged you."

"I understand from Thompson," remarked Talbot, "that young Lionel Grantley is anxious

to represent what was for so long a time a pocket family borough. I'm inclined to support him. What do you say to it? I like what I have seen of him."

"Oh, yes," at once said Robertson; "my eldest son knows him well. You know they were at Cambridge together, and passed out the same year."

"But if it's true," continued Talbot, "that Sir Roderick will not stand again, we shall want three men of our own views to fight against the Rads. If I stand and Grantley, that only makes two, and I want you, Robertson, to make the third. You know we shall have Brown standing again, though he comes with a poor chance as a stranger, and I have no doubt we shall find him leaving the town defeated and crestfallen."

"Of course," said Robertson, "we have all more or less known Lionel Grantley from his childhood," observed Robertson. "My father supported Lord Northfield before he went to the Upper House, and it would certainly gratify me to see Mr. Lionel there. Are you sure he

will stand? Did Thompson say it was a settled thing?"

"Well, Lionel called on me not long since, and told me himself he was bent upon it, and asked my advice. For my part," said Talbot, "I think a fitter man we could not have. I like men to go young into the House: it's for the advantage of the country. They learn business while they can be of use, and before they're dead old. I have heard my grandfather say that he remembered his father speaking of Pitt as prime minister when he was but three-and-twenty. The statesmen of our fathers' time were all too old—Palmerston, Gladstone, Beaconsfield, and the rest of them—they were all failures towards the end, and more like old women before they passed off the stage. They kept the youngsters back, and were themselves little more than obstructionists, always vacillating and uncertain what course they should take. Why, in those days a man was scarcely ever prime minister till near seventy. The country feels differently now; and young Mr. Lionel, if he comes in, will soon be to the fore."

"How is it this election comes about so quickly?" inquired Mr. Williams who had joined the other two, and was interested.

"Certainly there has been talk about it for some time, but no one expected this sudden break up of the cabinet."

"I am told," said Mr. Talbot, hesitating as he spoke in the presence of a third person, "that our friend Joseph Workington has been the cause of it; but I don't like to speak positively. It is well known how he has been changing his opinions, and growing wiser of late years, and nothing is more probable than that it is he who has wrecked the cabinet."

"Yes, you will recollect," remarked Robertson, taking up the point, "it was Workington, who, just twelve years ago, was the receiver of that most extraordinary packet of papers from Rome. I remember it well. I was almost the first to hear it from our old friend."

"You mean," interposed Talbot, "the papers which proved how Rome had harassed our Church for the last three centuries, and which showed, also, that if the Pope did ex-

communicate Queen Elizabeth, he repented of it and revoked the interdict."

"Yes, Talbot," added Robertson, "and from that time Workington always seemed to me an altered and an altering man."

"He has, at any rate," remarked Mr. Williams, "changed the right way."

"He never had, as far as I know," remarked Talbot, "any disposition for joining the Church of Rome, though he was so intimate at one time with the folks at Roscott. Of course, all nonsense of that sort has happily vanished out of the country, as we know by what happened here. The Anglican Church admitted, as it then was by Rome, to be the genuine branch in England of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, has healed that miserable schism for ever, and so there is in this country, as our generation has happily witnessed, no longer any Church of Rome to which a man, if so disposed, could go over."

"Ah, yes," said Robertson, "I well recollect his astonishment when those papers came into his hands. He prophesied a revolution in

Church matters, and it has come about, and is consolidating happily for the country. I happened to be in Polinghurst about the time. At first he hardly knew what to make of them. Certainly the papers were puzzling enough."

"Then it was that Workington became a confirmed Churchman, and saw how the nation had been long and wickedly deceived. You told me this, Robertson, I remember," said Talbot. "I did not know him so well at that time as I now do. It's a very interesting chapter in his life. Many men would have been driven into free-thinking by such a discovery as he then revealed to the country."

"It's due to Workington," remarked Mr. Williams, "that the cabinet withdrew the measure they had prepared for attacking the Church."

"You cannot doubt it," said Robertson and Talbot simultaneously, "and with his views," continued Talbot, "it was impossible he could submit to the line of policy the administration had in view. I have been daily expecting to

hear he would break out, and am not at all surprised.

"Yes, it's quite time," said Robertson when his turn came, "that such a Government should be capsized. I have felt with you and many others that sooner or later Workington would do it."

"A source of happy obstruction to the Government he has been," put in Mr. Williams, "as they would have tried the wicked game again. The first great evil that befel Ireland was disestablishment, and it would be the same or a worse evil here if ever brought about. The astonishing thing, however, is," he continued, "that Workington was ever invited to form one of this last cabinet, better known as he was. The first he was in lasted but a short time, a little more than a couple of years, as you know.

"I remember," said Talbot, again taking up the conversation, "he was regarded in that cabinet as the coming man. His chief colleague, John Freeman, was getting old and past work, and Glibword had passed his

seventieth year, and though still vigorous, and active and able to cut down trees as well as he had done some ten years before, men were beginning to doubt his judgment and to dislike his measures. He was of a past age. His feeble treatment of the Eastern Question—the meaningless Naval Demonstration—his vacillation in regard to the colonies in South Africa, and much more—barking when he never intended to bite—his failure to grasp the true opinions of the day, and his being satisfied first to abuse and then to copy the policy of his predecessors, all this lost him the confidence of the country, if he ever really possessed it. And then, look what a mess he made of Ireland locking up all malcontents. Workington, depend on it, took a lesson from all this. His admission within the cabinet showed him what ministerial responsibility is, in a kingdom like ours. It was not anything to play with, and he accepted office in a spirit of proper seriousness.”

Talbot pulled up almost out of breath. His feelings had carried him away.

"Pray continue your remarks Mr. Talbot," said Mr. Williams. "I feel deeply interested to know as much as possible about Workington."

"His eloquence gave him much influence," continued Talbot, "and his elevation to the Government was thought would strengthen it; I mean in the same cabinet in which he sat. But it was strangely overlooked by his leader that the man was already changing and feeling for fresh ground. His first experiences did not encourage him in his earlier views, nor did the tone of talk in the cabinet. The views he held when he first took office he felt soon to be too narrow for a country like England, with its community of every shade of opinion and multiplicity of interests. He was professedly a radical, but he was no republican. He was a non-conformist by education and from habit, but he had no hatred to the Church. He believed in religious toleration, but he honestly thought that the churchmen of the country should have equal rights and protection under our laws, as those who were

opposed to Church views. Depend on it, he will be found to have upset the Government. From what we know of him, Robertson, must it not be so ? ”

“ Well,” said Robertson, “ the London papers will be down in less than an hour, so we shall soon see.”

“ When did you last hear from him, Robertson ? ” enquired Talbot.

“ Good morning,” said Mr. Williams and retired, well satisfied with all he had heard.

“ I heard not many days ago,” replied Robertson, “ but he said nothing more in his letter, of a political nature, except that he felt still more than ever the intolerable discomfort of his position, and wished he had never consented to sit in this cabinet.”

“ Doesn’t that look,” asked Talbot, “ as if he meant to kick over the traces, on the first opportunity ? ”

“ And it now seems,” added Robertson, “ that he has done so. We shall hear from him in a day or two, how it has all happened. Meanwhile, if we are to prepare for an election,

let it be Lionel Grantley in the place of Sir Roderick, and you and I will do our best to be his colleagues. We'll keep all the Rads out this time, or my name's not Robertson."





CHAPTER VI.

PHILIP CALVERLEY.

LIONEL GRANTLEY came into the breakfast room next morning, finding his father and mother already there before him. His looks were hardly as bright and happy as usual. Lady Northfield had briefly told her husband the substance of the conversation she had held the previous evening with Lionel, and Lord Northfield at once addressed him on the subject of his travels, to preclude any immediate allusion to Marion Norman, which could only give them pain.

"You mean, then, to go, Lionel, your mother tells me, and I applaud your determination. If you get into the House you may

never have such an opportunity again. No one can tell how soon he may get involved in business occupations, making any prolonged absence full of difficulty. Once in the House, especially if representing a large constituency, time is no longer your own."

"Yes, father, I have made up my mind to accept your generous offer, and am most thankful to avail myself of it." This was spoken only with an affected cheerfulness, for Lionel was sick at heart.

But apart from all the reflections which crowded on him in reference to Marion and his parting from her in uncertainty as to her love for him, which he had so foolishly assumed to his discomposure, Lionel felt that travel was full of attraction to him. Naturally he was of high and uncontrollable spirits, filling him with a desire to have a wide knowledge of the world, of men and things. He was fond of history and art, and travel would give him a thousand opportunities of indulging his tastes in these particulars. He was to visit classic ground. He would stand in Rome,

the eternal city, and feast on the memories of the past. In a few months he might be surrounded by the ruins where Troy stood, where Priam bewailed the slaughter of his sons, where the noble Hector fell, and whence, amidst the flames and wreck of burning Ilium, the founder of the Latin race went forth bearing his aged father on his shoulders, and leading by the hand his little son. He would see, too, the cities of those mysterious Middle Ages which it had once been the fashion to call dark, and the numerous evidences of the cultivation and development of the centuries which followed. He would see, moreover, the lands where, in more recent times, populations had risen and asserted their rights and secured their liberties, and he would gather sympathy for the newly free, rejoicing in the extension of constitutional governments like that which his own land enjoyed. All this could not fail to help him as aiming to be a statesman, to have practical experience of the countries and their communities which some day perhaps he might have to guard and

vindicate. The panorama and its attractiveness passed through his mind in a moment with pleasing effect, and he re-affirmed his resolution.

"Yes, father," he said, "the offer is too good to refuse. I should like to start at the earliest possible date, for there is no time to lose, and you will keep me well posted up in politics, and the election we are expecting."

"I will, my boy," added his father: "I am as anxious as you can be to see you in the House. But have you thought yet of a travelling companion?" enquired Lord Northfield. "It would be very slow work for you to go alone, nor could you profit as much by what you will see without a friend with whom to compare notes."

"No, I have not," replied Lionel: thinking what joy would be his, could he have been accompanied by Marion as his wife; but that hope was full of the most painful uncertainty, if not absolutely gone.

"Well," resumed Lord Northfield, "you will, of course, take with you your faithful valet

and factotum, Jackson, who has waited on you so long and understands your ways; but I want you to select from amongst your friends, and you must have many suitable, some one who would accompany you continually as your secretary, but who would really be your *fidus Achates*. It would be dull work for you, I say, if you were without a fit and trusty companion to whom you can open your mind, and with whom you can exchange opinions."

"I think Philip Calverley," at once replied Lionel, "if he can be had. He and I were great chums at Cambridge, you may recollect. We kept on the same staircase, were of the same year and were very close to each other in finals. You know, I believe, that he has taken orders, for his mind was always bent on serving the Church. All I fear is that he may be so tied as to be unable to get away. You see no objection in his being a Clergyman, if I can induce him to leave his work for a time."

"Not in the least," rejoined Lord North-

field. "On the contrary, I regard it as an advantage, and," he added in a jocular mood, to try and rouse Lionel, who only too evidently was depressed by his fears and doubts about Marion, "you know, Lionel, he would keep you steady and respectable as occasion required."

"I will write to him this very day," said Lionel. "I owe him a letter. Won't he be astonished when he reads the contents. It will be very jolly if I can get him to go."

"Why, surely," exclaimed Lord Northfield, after a moment or two's reflection, "Calverley's the young fellow who spent the long vacation with you, when you went your tour through a part of Germany. He was here for a short time before you started. You will recollect him," he added, addressing Lady Northfield.

"Most certainly I do," replied Lady Northfield, "we were both of us, I remember, much taken with him, and," she added, turning to Lionel, "I thought you had shown great judgment and good taste in the selection of your friend, and so thought your father."

Lord Northfield retired to his library.

"Dear old boy," remarked Lionel, "Phil Caverley is a great favourite wherever he goes; so full of fun and life, and yet on proper occasions as sober as a judge. I do hope I shall get him. What time, mother, did you think of going to Plashetts? I should like to ride over, if you don't mind, and I could, perhaps, get Marion to take a round with me, as we have so often done."

"Well, I think that will be as good an arrangement as any," said Lady Northfield, "and you can leave me with Lady Winifred, to tell her of your intended travels."

"The morning is fine, let us start soon," urged Lionel. "I must end this miserable suspense."

"Be careful, my dear boy, what you do and say," said Lady Northfield, in a very deliberate and decided manner. "If you have not yet, as you tell me, spoken of love to Marion, and Maurice O'Callaghan has, your course will not be easy. Her honour may be implicated, and she may not feel herself free

to admit you, from being her old friend and playfellow, to be her lover or even confidant. Women, by instinct, are quick and discriminating, especially in any heart question. You must avoid anything so painful as might lead to a refusal, which would place us all as neighbours and fast friends, as we have been for years, in a position of the greatest awkwardness and discomfort."

"Mother, dear," observed Lionel, "you seem to speak as if you anticipated my disappointment. Think how intimate have dear Marion and I been from our very childhood. We cannot have any difficulty in opening to one another our minds. I think if Maurice O'Callaghan has really proposed to her, or for her, she would at once tell me as her oldest friend."

"Think nothing of the kind, Lionel," said Lady Northfield. "You have yet to learn experience of women's ways. The frankest of her sex, as I believe Marion to be, will not easily be induced to speak on such a subject to one of the opposite sex, however intimate.

The secret is the more hidden in proportion as it is cherished. Let us go over directly after luncheon.

Arrived at Plashetts, they found Lady Winifred and Marion strolling on the terrace, in front of the old house, where Lionel had seen Marion with Maurice O'Callaghan the day before. Sir Roderick they could discern in the conservatory, a little way beyond. When he observed the carriage driving up, he came out to give them welcome. Lionel was a few yards only in rear of his mother's barouche, as she reached the door.

Lady Northfield having accosted the two ladies, who came round the carriage door at once, said before she alighted, "Lionel, you see, is just behind. He is come to say good-bye for a time. He is starting on a continental tour for a few months. As he is riding, I believe, Marion, he means to ask you to take a round with him this fine day."

Lady Northfield with consummate tact thus broke the tidings, to frustrate any diffidence which Lionel might feel in asking

Marion to join him, and at that moment he rode up.

"So you want me to ride with you, Lionel," said Marion, when they had shaken hands. "You must wait then while I put on my habit, and order my horse. And," she added somewhat formally, "won't you dismount till we're ready?"

"Thank you, yes," replied Lionel, "I'll chat with Sir Roderick. You won't be long. I've a lot to tell you, and to talk about."

"O, I know," said Marion, with a smile, "I hear you're going away again, you bad man," and she put her finger to her eye simulating grief. "I shall turn my horse out to grass."

"Don't be foolish, Marion, go and get ready, there's a good girl. The day is too fine to be lost, and it's getting on."

"Suppose I say, Lionel, I won't ride to-day. You talk as if you had only come to tease me."

"Well, come along, Marion, our last chance for many a day."

The two were soon in the saddle, and quickly out of sight and out of hearing.

"So you're going to make a tour on the Continent," Marion began, "and you'll be gone for nine months. I wonder where we shall all be when you come back?"

"When did Maurice O'Callaghan go?" asked Lionel, just by way of a feeler.

"Oh, he went by an early train this morning," replied Marion. "Father talks of taking me to Ireland when he goes this time, so I shall not be dull, as I sometimes have been when they have gone without me."

Lionel felt he had made but a poor beginning. He had intended his question to be a leading one, which he could follow up with others, eliciting the real state of things; but he was foiled, and had made no progress, and must begin all over again.

"It's in a lovely spot the Manor," again began Lionel. "Though it was winter when I was there the country was charming. I did not see Castlemarten."

"Mr. O'Callaghan will be in Paris when we are at the Manor," said Marion.

This was some relief to Lionel.

"But," she added, "he made me promise to go over and see it, and tell him how I liked it."

Lionel felt he was on very tender ground.

"It has been in the family I know not how many hundred years," continued Marion. "It was the seat, he maintains, of the Munster Kings from whom he says he is directly descended. It must be a very interesting place by all accounts, for the sort of castle you read of in the old story books, where you expect to find a two-headed giant, and a little Jack walking up the avenue to blow the bugle, and challenge the giant to mortal combat."

"Lady Althæa lives in Paris all the year round," observed Lionel, who was sensible he was on the wrong tack altogether; "she has her daughter with her, who is said to be very beautiful."

"Yes," replied Marion, "I once saw Gertrude, I remember. They all came over to the Manor when we were there one year. She is older by a few years than me, and was

just grown up. No doubt she is very beautiful. You would admire her very much. You should go and call on Lady Althæa as you pass through Paris, and you would then see her. They know Lord and Lady Northfield, and of course as their son you would have the *entrée*. Lady Althæa's saloon is frequented by all the *élite* of Paris. When I saw her, poor Mr. O'Callaghan had not been killed. It was always said he would lose his life in the hunting field, he was so reckless a rider, and so it turned out."

"Lionel could not get on. For some minutes he continued silent. The conversation was too general, and he knew not how to give a more definite character to it, without committing the error against which his mother had cautioned him. All the ride would go and he would be no wiser. What should he say?"

At last he broke out: "Well, Marion, I wonder if you will be the same to me when I come back. I'm sure I shall not alter to you."

"Well, I'm sure, Lionel," said Marion, "what has induced you to make such a reflection. Have I given you any cause to think I should alter? Have you not always found me the same, when you have returned from London?"

"No doubt, no doubt," responded Lionel; "that is not quite what I mean: but as one grows older—"

"Be sure, dear Lionel, I shall always be," interposed Marion, "the same dear friend you have ever found me. Have we not been so from our earliest childhood? Time can make no difference in friendship."

That was exactly what Lionel did not want her to say. He wanted words stronger than conveyed a mere expression of friendship, but he could not draw them out and knew not how. If he referred again to a possibility of her changing, he would clearly after the admission of friendship she had made wound her feelings. Yes, he was sure he would find her the same unaltered friend on his return, but

he wanted more and had not the courage to ask it, through fear of disappointment.

"Marion," he at last blundered out, "dear Marion, you are no longer a child, have your feelings towards me grown up with your womanhood? We have ever been friends, but that does not satisfy all the love I bear you."

"O, Lionel, what has changed you that you should speak like this?" she said with great emotion. "What should ever make you think that you will find me different when you return, because I am grown up? Go happily away. Our intercourse has been ever affectionate and confiding. Let us talk of other things. How I envy your travels! You have many months of enjoyment before you, and on your return you are to contest Northfield. If I am here I will canvass for you, and you shall have the happiness of knowing that at any rate you have one female friend."

Poor Lionel was dumbfounded. He was not a whit wiser, and evidently would not be.

Was she evading the point he wanted to know, or in sheer simplicity knew not at what he was driving? A growing conviction, however, seemed to force itself on his mind that O'Callaghan had not proposed to her. But before his return Maurice might do so; and this thought troubled him. She could not have spoken as she had done of visiting Castle-marten, and examining that old abode of the man he felt was his rival; and that rival might have suggested the visit expressly to advance his aim; doubtless he had done so, and the only foil to that would be a pledge on the part of Marion which he felt he was unable to obtain. Friendship! he seemed to hate the very name of it. His heart, his whole being, was overflowing with love for her. All he could say as they rode up together to the door of Plashetts wanted but the response he was not to get.

"Well, Marion, I shall leave my heart in your keeping," and they dismounted, and he was unable to catch her brief reply, which, had it not been inaudible, would have given him hope

Lionel returned with his mother to Rushbrooke Hall, and gave his horse to his groom to lead back.

As the two drove home, neither for some time spoke. Lady Northfield, with a true woman's penetration, saw at once that Lionel had not much profited by his ride, and Lady Winifred, as was to be expected, had made no allusion to their late guest, Maurice O'Callaghan.

"You will hear in a day or two, no doubt, dear Lionel," began Lady Northfield, at the end of a long pause, "from your friend, Mr. Calverley. I hope you may secure his companionship."

"Yes, he is sure to reply by return of post," answered Lionel. "He responds to letters much more promptly than I acknowledge his."

"I could make nothing certain of Marion, mother," he added, after another pause, feeling that as he had spoken to his mother, it was better as well as comforting to go on.

"How was that?"

"I suppose I expressed myself very badly

and unintelligibly. We could not get beyond expressions of friendship. Yet I don't think O'Callaghan has asked her to be his wife."

"You judge that, I presume," said Lady Northfield, "from the general current and tone of your conversation. Well, you may be right and I trust for your own sake you are," she added, reluctant to renew the conversation.

"Marion, Lady Winifred told me, is to accompany them this time to the manor," observed Lady Northfield, gradually, to change the topic, but it failed.

"Oh, indeed, did she tell you that?" asked Lionel. "Why, Marion told me the same thing, so that the same idea was in both their minds. I much fear there is more in it than—I like."

"You must leave her with faith, and have a good courage," said Lady Northfield, forced again into the same strain of conversation. "I did not expect you would elicit anything certain, or come to any such conclusion as you intended. Had you not known there was ground, as we are supposing, for suspecting

Mr. O'Callaghan's intentions, you could have spoken of marriage without reserve."

"I tried to believe that the coast was clear, but could not satisfy myself it was, and this made me sadly hesitate and blunder. In fact, I feel I made a regular mess of it, and I suffer through my own stupidity."

"I fear," observed Lady Northfield, "you are beginning to be a self-tormentor. These discomforts and suspicions may after all be mere creations of your own brain. As you must remain in some uncertainty for a time, I don't say try to be indifferent, but to have some courage, and to trust in the effects of your own past intercourse with her. She cannot be insensible to your love, though neither of you have revealed to each other the extent of your affections."

"On the contrary, dear mother," Lionel immediately said, "to-day I did speak of love, and told her plainly that friendship for her did not satisfy me, and that I hoped since we were no longer children her feelings for me 'had grown up with her womanhood.' That was the expression I used."

“Marion, dear, pure and simple child that she is, my dear boy,” said Lady Northfield with a smile, “would no more have understood what you intended than if you had spoken to her in Hebrew. You have still got to learn the part of a lover, Lionel. You must study romances, read poetry, and try your hand again when you come back.” But, notwithstanding this somewhat satirical speech, Lady Northfield gathered plainly from what her son had said that Marion really was not engaged to Maurice O’Callaghan, and she felt happier herself, though she failed to make her son so ; and the subject was dropped.

They reached the door, and separated.

Philip Calverley next morning was holding in his hand the letter his old college friend had written him. He had read it with not less gratification than surprise. But the contents will be best understood from the letter itself. Here it is :—

“ Rushbrooke Hall, Yorkshire,

“ Feb. 15, 1900.

“ DEAR OLD MAN,

“ I know not why I have left your last letter so long unanswered. But let that pass. I have now a communication to make to you of a proposal coming from my dear father, which I heartily hope you may be able to join me in, as we all so much wish.

“ Lord Northfield thinks I should decide to take an extended tour abroad. He has information from a good source that no general election is likely to occur for some months to come, it may be, he says, eighteen or more; and he wants me to occupy the interval in moving about on the Continent, wherever fancy bends my steps. He has drawn up a sort of programme, by way merely of suggestion. Part of the time, it is arranged, I am to spend in Rome with my mother's brother, who is there as the English *Chargé d'Affaires*. If there is time, from this I shall go on to the East.

“ With his usual generosity, I am to have an open letter of credit, and letters of introduction

to the different courts, without end. My father urges me strongly to take a friend with me as companion and secretary. I have named you, and he approves. You are to have, if it suits you, £250 a-year, and, of course, all expenses paid. Now, can you come? Do; like a dear old boy, as you always are. He bids me say that in leaving your strictly professional duties for a short time, to serve me (what a joke!) and him, he shall not forget that on your return you will have a distinct claim on him for early preferment.

"I go to London to-morrow. Send me a line to the Junior University Club, and promise me you will be my *compagnon de voyage*.

"Always yours, dear old man,

"Most affectionately,

"LIONEL GRANTLEY.

"The Rev. Philip Calverley,

"Southwold, Suffolk."

"What am I to do with this pretty thing?" reflected Calverley, as he turned the letter again and again in his fingers. "A good and kind

offer, not to be rejected if possible. I wonder what the vicar may say."

By that evening's post he replied as follows:—

"Southwold, Feb. 16, 1900.

"DEAR GRANTLEY,

"Your proposal is most generous and kind, and embraces the very thing of all others in which my heart delights. What chance has a clergyman of seeing life and the world beyond his own parish or neighbourhood, except under the happy circumstances your letter details.

"I shall not be able to see my vicar till to-morrow, as to-day he is from home. I shall urge, if necessary, my great wish to go with you; but he is a kind-hearted man, and I feel sure will not stand in the way of my advancement.

"It is just like you to have thought of me when the number of your friends is so large. Well, if the vicar will let me off for the rest of my engagement, which is not long, what a jolly time we shall have of it!

"More definite news I hope to send you to-morrow. If you are writing home, may I ask you to tender my thanks, and my best respects, to Lord and Lady Northfield.

"Always yours, affectionately,

"PHIL. CALVERLEY.

"The Hon. Lionel Grantley,

"Junior University Club,

"London, S.W."

Next day, as early as he decently could, Calverley went to the Vicarage.

The vicar, Mr. Burdon, was at home, and received him with his usual cordiality. "Well, Calverley," he said, "what's your news? Nothing of consequence happened during my short absence?"

"Yes, Vicar, something of the greatest consequence to myself," replied Philip.

"Have you been presented with a living, or what is it?" enquired Mr. Burdon.

"I have not been presented to a living," said Calverley, "but I want your kind permission to leave you at once, or at furthest in

a few days. Will you be good enough to read this letter which reached me yesterday morning? I should have come to you directly about it; the proposal has so absorbed my thoughts that I could not rest till I had seen you;—my excuse for intruding on you so early—but you were absent yesterday.”

“My dear Calverley, I must not hear you speak of your visit to me as an intrusion,” said Mr. Burdon. “You are always welcome at the Vicarage.” He had already opened the tendered letter, and was reading it.

“Go, of course you must go,” he at once remarked, when he had finished. “You are quite right to have come to me. I give my consent with all my heart, and congratulate you on your good prospects. I could not for a moment stand in the way of any young man’s advancement, and this seems very promising and satisfactory, and especially gratifying as coming from an old college friend. You were at Cambridge with Mr. Grantley. He’s the eldest son of Lord Northfield, I think I have heard you say.”

"The only son and child, Vicar," said Philip Calverley, "and very much prized, for he is as good as he is clever."

"Do you mean he was distinguished at Cambridge?"

"Well, you know my degree," replied Calverley, "he was one immediately above me in both triposes."

"Indeed!"

"We kept on the same staircase at Trinity," continued Calverley, "in adjoining rooms all the time we were up. We were fast friends the whole time, and have since continued so; though we have necessarily been separated we have never ceased to correspond."

"Write and say you will go: that I will be no obstacle. Nay, more, I will this day write to the bishop to get his sanction to release you. Don't trouble about that. I will manage everything till I get a successor. Sorry to lose you," continued the kind-hearted old gentleman; "hoped you would have stayed long, but could hardly expect it. If this had not turned up, something else no doubt would. I trust I

may get another like you. When do you want to start?"

"I should like to say to Grantley that I will follow my letter to-morrow; you see," said Philip, "he tells me he is in town, making the necessary preparations. If I am to go with him, I must not cause him delay. Could you not write to Thompson who was here some three weeks ago? He is just out of his first curacy, and would willingly come, I know, for he was delighted with his visit here, and I think you would like him. I will write by the same post, if you think fit, urging him to accept your offer. He could come at once to my rooms, and as I shall pay Mrs. Horne three months' rent for leaving her so abruptly, though my arrangement is one month's notice, this would be an advantage to Thompson, who is welcome to it."

"Not a bad thought at all," observed the vicar, "and well worked out. Write by all means. I will do so myself, and you can back me. I think if Thompson will come, we can get on very well together, judging from what

I saw of him when he was with you. But don't drive and harass him on my account. If he gets to us in ten days or a fortnight it will do."

Calverley thanked the vicar for his kindness and consideration, and the two shook hands with mutual good will. "Let me hear from you sometimes," said the vicar, and Calverley bowed and went out.

All was now plain and clear before him, reflected Calverley with himself, as he walked towards his lodgings. He thought of sending a message through the Post Office the same evening, but the consideration that this would be divulging his views to the post-master and so to the parish caused him to desist. He was satisfied with writing the following note:—

"DEAR GRANTLEY,

"Nothing is in the way. The vicar was most kind, and would not hear of my speaking of inconvenience to himself. He will put it right also with the Bishop.

“I will follow this note by an early train
to-morrow.

“Affectionately yours,

“PHILIP CALVERLEY.

“Southwold, Feb. 17, 1900.”





CHAPTER VII.

AN ECCLESIASTICAL DISCOVERY.

WITHIN a few days Lionel Grantley and Philip Calverley had started on their travels, taking with them the faithful valet of the former, Jackson, an old servant of Lord Northfield's family, who had served Lionel from his earlier years.

Very different were the feelings of the two young men as they left the shores of old England. Philip Calverley, in the highest spirits, was anticipating justly the fullest intellectual enjoyment from the course of travel which was before them. Unlike Lionel Grantley, he had no *arrières-pensées*. Lionel was low and greatly oppressed by his sorrow, and more so on ac-

count of the strong efforts he made to conceal and repress it. His trial had come on him altogether unexpectedly, as we have seen, by a singular circumstance, the conclusions he had drawn from which were surrounded by the most painful uncertainty; and his wretched sufferings were known only, as he believed, to his mother, Lady Northfield, who had tried in vain to console and give him fresh courage.

Perhaps some day, he thought, he might seek relief and direction by confiding his trouble to his old and dear friend, Philip, whom he now had entirely to himself. To unbosom himself to a companion whom he well knew he could trust, was a very natural course to take, and though he would do nothing hastily in this respect, because it necessarily involved Marion, still dearer to him than ever, in any reference he might make to his sorrow, he could not dismiss the intention altogether from his mind. He might require to divulge it some time or other, to account to his friend for the diminished elasticity of his

spirits which he feared day by day Calverley might notice.

While they are absent from England, we shall take the opportunity to narrate some particulars in Lionel's earlier life, and give a brief record of many events of high importance which occurred during the closing years of the century, in the period while Lionel was growing up from childhood to manhood.

Both socially and politically, in a very remarkable degree, some of those events served to mark the period in a very memorable manner. To these were the altered and altering condition of the country mainly to be attributed. Transitions of an extensive nature are often insensibly brought about, without much notice on the part of those who live in an age of change. Lionel's ambition was to live and act a noble part in his high station, and we are to see what field he was to find before him, for one who was loyal to the constitution and desired to be a benefactor in his day.

With these aims, we conduct our readers

first to Rome. For many years one of the chief topics on which speculation had been indulged in the Eternal City was the conversion of England to the faith and communion of the Apostolic See. Eminent divines and laymen of distinguished rank had relinquished the church of their baptism and taken refuge in the Romish communion in England. How secessions ceased we shall now learn in the natural progress of our story.

Cardinals Bianchi and Gonsalvo were closeted in an inner chamber within the Vatican. The former was the reigning Pope's private secretary; the latter filled the office of librarian in the Vatican and Keeper of the Rolls.

"I have well considered, your Excellency," began Cardinal Gonsalvo, "the proposal you made with regard to the discovery of the papers found with a copy of the last testament of Sixtus the Fifth. I am quite unable to see my way to the suppression of these papers. In my conscience, I cannot be a party to such violence to truth. If history, in an important

and most solemn particular, requires rectification, in justice to the memory of this Pope, apart from any other urgent considerations, the truth should be told."

"I hope your Excellency," observed Bianchi, "does not conceive me to be averse to vindicate this or any other of the holy fathers who have been called to their account. My anxiety has regard to the Holy Church, and the position of the Catholic cause in the eyes of all Europe, and more especially in England, to which these papers relate. You know how greatly England has been moved for more than a whole generation by the claims of catholicity which have been urged so strenuously and effectively in that important section of the Western Church, especially by many of the chief converts from the Anglican communion. Are we to show that these claims never had any foundation whatever? If those papers see the light, England is for ever lost to papal dominion, which we have been labouring so long and so arduously to restore."

The Cardinals sat silent, facing each other

without a sign for several minutes. Gonsalvo was cautious. He had no desire to offend his master, or quarrel with Bianchi, or do in fact anything that would injure the spiritual power or supremacy of Rome.

At last he rejoined, "I have yet to be convinced, your Excellency, that the disclosure would be prejudicial to our communion. The Anglican Church at one time was the truest and most trusty friend to catholicity. She may become so again. If her separation from us were shown to be no fault of hers, what then?"

"What then, Cardinal?" said Bianchi peevishly, repeating Gonsalvo's question. "Are you not suggesting a course tending really to justify her separation?"

"I don't agree with you, Cardinal," continued Gonsalvo. "It is Rome, you know in this, which cannot justify her course in the past. Every Roman ecclesiastic is well aware than our section in England claiming to be exclusively catholic is distinctly schismatical. If the confession of the very Pope who placed

on England the interdict were published, this schism must end. Are we never to have the good faith and courage to acknowledge it? and by the suppression of these papers can we consent to permit this wrong to continue, when the rectification of it, according to the view for which I contend, though it sacrifice the so-called catholic section in England, may by that means restore the whole country to one communion?"

Cardinal Bianchi was puzzled and angry. He felt the full force of the important fact which was against him, but he winced to admit it. "Do you mean," he said, raising his voice, "that an independent church and people, as we find them in England, would submit to Rome if they knew that the interdict by which Elizabeth and her people were excommunicated was a sham, and was really revoked very shortly after it was published by its author, Sixtus the Fifth? I can never believe it. Intercommunion in such an event would become impossible. Such a step would crush the catholics in England. The utter baselessness of their position would be demonstrated. All

their past sacraments and functions would distinctly be shown to be heretical ; and would you, Cardinal, strike so fatal a blow ? ”

“ But if those papers are true, as you well know them to be,” retorted Gonsalvo, their position is all false, as you describe it, from the first. It cannot be sustained ; it never could. Our obstinacy, abuse, and persevering dogmatism have succeeded in making a footing for what we know is but a non-conforming sect. All their ministrations are vicious, and must continue to be to the end, if these papers be genuine and true.”

Gonsalvo was much moved as he thus delivered himself. He was thinking of the near three hundred years during which this imposition had been permitted and employed so dishonestly by his own church to serve her ends.

“ But they are genuine and true, I presume,” suggested Bianchi, who felt he was beaten by the very honesty of his fellow-cardinal. He was, moreover, anxious himself to examine the papers, and, if possible, to possess himself of them. “ You are sure,” he observed, “ they

convey the precise meaning you affix? They may be the work of some protestant impostor."

"Impostor!" rejoined Gonsalvo; "how, through any such source, should they have found their way into the secret cabinet where state-papers of note are deposited? I have told your Excellency how the papers were inside a copy of the note of Pope Sixtus the Fifth, with the letter from Philip the Second demanding the excommunication and deposition of Elizabeth."

"It seems incredible!" muttered Bianchi.

"There is an authority and command accompanying it, for instant publication on the demise of the holy father."

"Astounding!" exclaimed Bianchi; "may I see them for myself?" he asked, rising up from his seat, hoping as he did when he preferred this question, that opportunity for seizing the papers might occur, of which he would avail himself without scruple.

Gonsalvo was himself a cardinal, and not easily to be tricked or outwitted.

"You may see them for yourself, most cer-

tainly," he at once replied. "I have confidence in your integrity. I will intrust them willingly to your keeping for a time."

Bianchi was all readiness to receive them and believed he had gained his end—"but," added Gonsalvo, as he handed him a packet, "I certify you these are true and correct copies? How long will your Excellency wish to keep them? I have the originals in safe custody, and I am quite resolved to communicate them ere long to the holy father."

Bianchi felt he was beaten. He replied, "I will see your Excellency again on this subject this day week. Meanwhile, use, I pray you, the interval to consider well the determination you have taken, and let this conference, if you please, be confined to our own breasts."

"Oh, yes," said Gonsalvo, as they parted, "I have no intention of speaking on the subject to any but the pope."

And the cardinals separated till the day fixed for their further discussion of this matter.



CHAPTER VIII.

AN INSTANCE OF ROMAN INFALLIBILITY.

CARDINAL BIANCHI retired at once, with the papers he had received from Gonsalvo, to his private apartments.

He was annoyed, incensed beyond description, as he read and re-read these remarkable documents, the genuineness of which, if he held true copies, he felt it would be useless to dispute.

Gonsalvo, he was persuaded, could have no motive to deceive him. For near three hundred years had the papers lain in the cabinet, placed in the very part which this Sixtus himself had rebuilt, embellished and named the *Bibliotheca Vaticana*, the same building in

which Gonsalvo and he had conversed on them and their discovery.

How strange it all seemed, he reflected, as he traversed back in imagination over that long space of time bewildered by the multiplicity of his thoughts and continually varying conjectures.

"The interdict a sham," he said to himself, "nothing but a sham, and bolstered up three centuries for a purpose; what a discovery, and to what a revolution does it not lead! No wonder if secretaries or keepers have seen the documents in past years, they took good care not to divulge them. I wish one had found courage to commit them to the flames. Fool that Gonsalvo is to have disclosed them even to me! He is a traitor! It's well to talk of conscience, and communicating the intelligence to the pope. Can nothing be done to suppress the facts, or divert Gonsalvo from his purpose?"

As he paced his apartment to and fro, under the excitement which ruled him, he paused now and again as he passed the table on which

the papers lay, looking steadfastly at the signatures.

First his eye naturally caught the name of Felice Peretti, written in the firm bold hand of the cultivated of that time, and finished with the curious cypher which each writer chose to affix to his name according to his fancy. There it stood, Felice Peretti, witnessed by his attendant cardinals, all in due form and order.

"No disputing this," he said in muttering tones. And at the next turn his eye fell on the sign-manual of Philip the Second, quite intelligible and regular, but clumsy and large as one who had his fingers under very doubtful control. The contents of this letter showed that with angry words, approaching to fearful menaces, the proud monarch demanded the excommunication of Elizabeth, and that an interdict be laid on her whole realm of England under pain of Philip's severest displeasure.

The other document showed in plainest terms that Sixtus had yielded only to this godless pressure, restricting the interdict to his lifetime, and finally revoking it in due course.

Why was this important state-paper kept concealed? was a question Cardinal Bianchi found no difficulty in answering to himself. But why it should have remained in secret so long, and why the discovery of it should have fallen upon his own times, he could not account for in any satisfactory way. Gonsalvo must destroy those papers—the letter and the declaration;—he must burn them and say nothing about it. “Well,” he added, “on further reflection, the letter might stand unless its tone shows too clearly the unwillingness of Sixtus to yield: but the solemn declaration of disapproval, and the revocation of his own act—to publish this to the world after concealment for three hundred years—this would be disastrous, certain ruin of the papal power, exposing villany through successive ages of papal rule!”

Could he, a faithful son of the Church, a prince of the Church, bear any part in this;—could he suffer this? Yet, Gonsalvo seemed determined, and the originals were with him. How came it about that some keeper of the

Vatican library ages before had not contrived some way or other to suppress the whole thing: why, he reiterated again and again, should the mischief arise in his days? He must do something to prevent disclosure.

What could he do? nothing, he felt, if Gonsalvo remained constant to the conviction of what he believed his duty to be.

The holy father might restrain him, but had he not promised Gonsalvo secrecy and silence, and had not he himself enjoined the same course till he and his friend met again.

How should he endure the suspense of a whole week? If he could only prevail with Gonsalvo to commit these documents to their old sleeping-place, and there let them be for a future generation, as so many of his predecessors had done before him; or else assuredly, before the matter was brought under the attention of the holy father, communication of it should be made with the cardinals in England.

But they are honest in England, he then reflected: they are patriotic: they hate shams

and subterfuges: and the slightest intimation of this discovery and of the evidence showing how they had been cajoled for three whole centuries, would set in flames in England the whole catholic community, terminating at once and for ever papal rule there, and dissipating all hope of the recovery of the Anglican Church to their allegiance and communion.

The cardinal was distracted, angry, and upset. He had never expected to have such a crisis to encounter. But he must be patient for the week, said he. "At any rate, I shall have plenty of time for further reflection. Something must be determined," but what, for the present, he was not prepared to say.

The week of intense suspense and anxiety to Cardinal Bianchi at length passed away, and the two ecclesiastics were again together in Gonsalvo's apartment.

"I am more satisfied than ever," began the Keeper of the Library, "that the time has come when these documents should see the light. The publication of them, I am fully

persuaded, will have the effect of reconciling the Anglican Church."

"Well, continue," said Bianchi, in an evidently critical mood.

"At least as far as Rome is concerned," Gonsalvo went on, "we shall place the Anglican Communion in the position she of right occupies, and frankly make the admission, as honest men, that she is and has been all along through the ages a true member and branch of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church."

"Well, go on your Excellency," interposed Bianchi in the same sinister tones.

"The time for this," Gonsalvo urged, "I believe to be most opportune. Their best and most learned doctors have always valued apostolicity, and have maintained they possessed it in spite of the interdicts which they have treated with scorn—just treatment as it now seems;—and of late years the chief controversies in England have turned on this, and have terminated, as your Excellency well knows, in the marked success of what they there call the High Church Party."

"And in vindicating the Anglican Communion you stultify the Roman," rejoined Bianchi, in an irritable and sarcastic tone. "You seem, Cardinal, to forget you are a prince of the Holy Roman Church."

"It is for this very reason I advocate the course I indicate," said Gonsalvo, with marked emphasis. "I am sick and ashamed of the uncatholic way in which Rome has so long treated the Anglican Church, huffed at her Reformation which every independent communion has a perfect right to promote and regulate as she chooses. Is Rome never to forget this slap in the face?"

"Oh, pray go on, and let me hear you out," said Bianchi, hardly knowing whether he was more angry or amused.

"May it please your Excellency to consider," continued Gonsalvo, "that we cannot alter facts. If Sixtus the Fifth did indeed revoke this interdict with all solemnity and formality, and left evidence to show that he was hardly to be considered a willing party to its publication, we cannot change this record,

and surely the first who ought to know it are those who have been wronged by it."

"Did we of this age do the wrong?" petulantly enquired Bianchi.

"We consent to it, and connive at it," said Gonsalvo, unruffled by his brother-cardinal's manifestation of temper. "For three hundred years has England rested under and been afflicted by this empty ban. It is true the English people have disregarded it, have repudiated it, have contended as a Church that they are truly catholic in spite of it. But what has been our course? To thrust on them a priesthood which is schismatical from the first, to harry at all points a true branch of the Catholic Church, to represent their position as false which we know to be sound and true, and at last to send our bishops and cardinals as *in partibus infidelium*, as we are pleased to call that faithful country, and what is worst of all, to give colour to the separation of the hundred non-conformists' sects in the country by the plea they first separated from Rome, setting an example of separation, of infraction of Unity."

"You plead well for England," remarked Bianchi, with the same scorn and curling lip.

"We are rightly served at last, I think you must allow, Cardinal," resumed Gonsalvo, "in thus discovering that had Sixtus the Fifth been obeyed, this schism would never have been, this long disturbance of catholic relation never have existed, this wicked concealment which has deceived the world never been perpetrated. I blush for my communion which is thus shown to occupy so false and unjustifiable a position!"

"Gonsalvo!" exclaimed Bianchi, rising impulsively from his chair, "you mistake your duty. You will incur the censures of the Church. Why should you take on yourself to do what others have avoided doing, to whom these papers must have been as accessible as to you? Surely men as upright and conscientious as yourself, who have occupied the post you fill, must have seen these papers, and they left them where they found them." Bianchi was working himself into a passion.

"Answer my remarks," said Gonsalvo,

patiently and with deliberation. "I have grave doubts whether these papers ever have seen the light, before my hand came on them. Their dusty and crushed condition seem to indicate as much. They must have been placed where I found them, is my conviction, by the secretary of Sixtus the Fifth, or the Keeper of the Rolls of his day, for the custodian was conjured to make them public. He must have placed them there for security till his opportunity arrived to publish them, or he may have died soon after placing them there and never have had the opportunity."

Bianchi saw that his irascibility made no impression on Gonsalvo, and he observed with more calmness, "Singular is what you say, but not impossible. If it were so, at any rate the credit of the Church in this matter would be largely covered. We have no evidence to show that former keepers alighted on these papers. Who was secretary at the time?"

"I have not yet searched the annals," said Gonsalvo, "but we could easily ascertain.

Independently, however, of all those considerations, with which I certainly see no reasons for complicating the case, my hand has come on this decree, and solemnly I declare to your Excellency, the holy father shall know it."

"Cardinal Gonsalvo," interposed Bianchi, again getting excited, "I entreat you, take time to consider what you intend doing. Think of all the consequences to the Church. Think how you may anger the holy father, who may regard you as a mere meddler, interfering where you oughtnot."

"My duty, your Excellency," observed Gonsalvo, "is to God, to the holy father, and the Church, and I have already well considered, and am of firm resolve."

"Gonsalvo, the holy father has the means of restraining his impetuous servants," said Bianchi with emphasis, as he rose to leave the room.

"Do you threaten me too, Bianchi?" was the only response.

That very night copies of the documents

were despatched, through the English *Chargé d'Affaires*, to one who had been a minister of state in England.

The same post carried the following short letter to Lord Northfield:—

“MY DEAR NORTHFIELD,

“Though strictly private and confidential, I must tell you I have been to-day requested to send to a late minister in England, whom I think you know, as strange a despatch as ever came under my notice. The cardinal who brought the papers to me—copies of originals which he read over to me—to certify, is an honest large-hearted man, full of human sympathies. His prime faith is that Christendom will be ‘unified,’ as he calls it: and to this end he has shaped his life, and directs his unceasing prayers as a strict catholic.

“He has quite lately discovered in the Vatican library, of which he is the keeper, papers of importance relating to the interdict which Pope Sixtus the Fifth, at the instance

of that unmitigated bully, Philip the Second, was forced to lay upon Elizabeth and her kingdom, and copies of these, certified by myself, form the substance of this curious despatch. As historical documents they are certainly full of interest: their ecclesiastical and political importance it is not my place to measure. I am myself communicating them to the English foreign minister, but I could not prevail with the cardinal to be satisfied with this. He had resolved to send his own copies to the ex-minister to whom I allude, who, that you may know him, I will tell you is member for Polinghurst. He is a personal friend of the cardinal, and I fancy from what he said holds views respecting Church Unity in sympathy with the cardinal.

“ You will be sure to hear the outcome of this strange business, which before long must be proclaimed from the housetops.

“ Give my dearest love to my sister. My dear godson Lionel must be growing a great boy by this time. When he makes the tour of Europe a few years hence, if I am here, he

will, of course, make my quarters his home
when he comes Romeward.

“Your affectionate Brother-in-law,
“LIONEL HENRY W.

“The Right Hon. Lord Northfield,
“&c., &c., &c.
“ROME, Sept., 20.”

“*P.S.*—When you have read these papers I
don’t know what you may think of Roman
Infallibility? The mistake it shows up has
only been in existence some three hundred
years!”





CHAPTER IX.

THE POPE'S DECISION.

GONSALVO had lost no time in seeking an interview with the holy father.

He felt, after the very decisive step which he had taken, in transmitting the papers to England, that the delay of a single day would be full of danger. The papers sent through the English representative at Rome could not be very long before reaching their destination, and as soon as their contents became known to the world he would be closely questioned on the subject, as Keeper of the Library where they were deposited. It was true, had he kept his own counsel, the blame of divulging these documents might by inference have fallen on

Bianchi, to whom alone he had intrusted copies of them, and he felt more than half inclined, that he might punish the cardinal for his impetuous behaviour at their last interview, to let this purpose take its course.

He could trust the English statesman, to whom his despatch was sent, to be true to him, and, if necessary, to stifle any suspicions that might be awakened. But reflection told him that to communicate his discovery to the pope was his better course. He would thus not leave his brother cardinal to be the victim of the circumstances over which, for the moment, he had himself full control, nor expose himself to the obloquy which he certainly might incur when all the details of this delicate business were ultimately brought to light.

The cardinal and holy father had been closeted some hours, and were still in close and earnest conversation.

"We are not, I believe," said the pope, "without precedents with respect to the removal of interdicts."

"Your holiness will doubtless remember the Bull of Paul the Fifth, in laying the Venetian republic under censure and prescription, and how, through the mediation of King Henry, the interdict was removed."

"True, the precedent is of high value too," remarked the pope, "in the present question; for it is more recent than the interdict of Sixtus. Refer, cardinal, to the date. It was as late, if I recollect rightly, as the early part of the seventeenth century."

The cardinal had already referred before he had sought this interview, and he answered promptly, "in the year 1606, may it please your holiness, the interdict was pronounced, and removed in the following year, 1607."

"During the Middle Ages," added the pope, "when the use of interdicts was more frequent, instances of their removal are numerous. You have the documents about you?"

"I have, your holiness," replied Gonsalvo, "shall I read them?"

"You are clear about their genuineness and authenticity: have you made a *précis* of these

papers. If you have, I think I may trust you that you are correct, and the chief points in the documents will enable me to come to a decision. We need not at present read the whole."

Cardinal Gonsalvo answered, "I have gone, your holiness, through these documents again and again, with the care proportionate to their solemn importance. I have made a *précis*, which is particular and correct, and can very shortly lay their exact contents before you."

Gonsalvo took some papers from his pocket and began to read:

"After the usual recital of names and dates, the first document proceeds to say, that through the urgent importunity and threats of King Philip the Second of Spain, Sixtus had been prevailed upon, in opposition to his conscience and will, to pronounce against Queen Elizabeth of England and her realm sentence of excommunication, which was finally delivered and published."

"You have seen the letter of King Philip, I think you said," interposed the holy father.

"It is the second document, your holiness,"

continued Gonsalvo, "and was placed inside the other document, and is here in my hand, if your holiness will read it."

The pope seized the letter quickly, and as quickly ran his eye over it. The contents occupied but a few lines, full of anger and threatening, and the name of Philip the Second, King of Spain, stood out in bold characters at the foot.

"It was this which prevailed with the holy father," observed the pope, handing back the letter to Gonsalvo: "continue your abstract."

Gonsalvo resuming, said, "then follows a solemn repudiation of the sentence, and instructions that the interdict should be removed at least at his decease. He charges his private secretary with this duty, and enjoins on him instant obedience when the occasion occurs."

"What signatures does the document bear?" enquired his holiness.

"First, the signature of Sixtus the Fifth himself," said the cardinal.

"Felice Peretti di Montalto,
Dei Gratia Sixtus V."

The witnesses are "Rinaldo Picalomini, Epis-

copus, Card. Rom. Eccles. Cathol., and Gabriel Paleotti, S.T.P.”

“Gabriel Paleotti,” repeated his holiness, “the first Archbishop of Bologna;—and the date?”

“June, 1589,” said Gonsalvo, referring to his paper; “and he died in August of the same year.”

“Strange, strange indeed,” his holiness said with marked emotion. “Apparently he was sensible that the time of his account was so near, and this made him anxious to acquit his conscience while life remained. I must indeed see to this: some action must be promptly taken. Have you done anything in it?”

“I have handed copies of these documents to the private secretary of your holiness, Cardinal Bianchi, and—”

“Let him instantly come to me,” hastily said the pope, “you will return yourself in half-an-hour.”

The holy father’s precipitancy in giving this order had saved Gonsalvo from a disagreeable and embarrassing confession. As he left the

chamber he congratulated himself on his present escape. "But," said he, reflecting within himself, "the holy father must know it. Should he determine to communicate the whole truth to England, the disclosure he had already made might be easily explained: but should he order that the papers should be restored to the cabinet and still remain concealed, as they had so long been, and the publication of them be left to the discretion of his successors, as had apparently been done with preceding popes, he surely would himself incur the holy father's severest displeasure, and the censures of the Church as Bianchi had threatened."

Having accosted as he passed through the second chamber the official in attendance, he delivered his master's message to summon Cardinal Bianchi, and returned tired and excited to his apartments for the half-hour the pope had appointed.

"Cardinal Bianchi," said the pope as soon as the attendant had retired, "you have of course read the papers which Gonsalvo has discovered, and of which he tells me he has given you copies.

Did it not occur to your excellency that you should have come to me on the subject, or that at least you should have spoken of it yesterday when we were together at business in the morning."

"Your holiness," rejoined Bianchi, with the blandest of smiles and the most courteous of bows, "it was only yesterday after I had left you that I had a second interview with Gon-salvo touching this matter, an interview which he had named at the close of our first meeting, when he made to me the communication: I was consequently insufficiently prepared at that time to go into it."

The pope was hardly satisfied with this explanation, but he did not press it further. "Well, your excellency," he remarked, "has now doubtless read the papers and are master of their contents? There is certainly not much obscurity about them."

"If they see the light," observed Bianchi, "the increasing rule of your holiness in England will soon terminate. We must acknowledge without reserve, these papers being made known, that we can have standing there no longer."

“What was our position in England before the interdict?” enquired the pope of his secretary “We have had no temporal power in England since the reign of Henry the Eighth, and appeals to us from England have long been prohibited and discontinued.”

“That is so, your holiness, but during a late part of this century,” observed Bianchi, “the disposition of the people of England towards the Roman See has marvellously grown and strengthened, while your holiness knows that the aristocracy of the country in large numbers, looking on the Reformation as vulgar and plebian, have become reconciled to the Church.”

“A passing fashion,” observed the pope, “little more. This tendency, however, to conform to the ancient faith, however extensive, has not in any single respect restored the temporal power; and paramount as Parliament has become, it is manifest that the Roman See can never gain again in secular things dominion over the country. We have lost our temporal power even here.”

"Your holiness inclines then, I gather, to let these papers go forth to the world," observed Bianchi.

At this moment Gonsalvo returned. Bianchi had intended to suggest their suppression, but feared he was foiled by the entrance of his brother cardinal. He remarked simply that they had been kept secret during a long period, approaching three hundred years.

"Yes," said his holiness, leaning back in his chair, "and now let me hear you discuss what, in this critical business, you consider our course ought to be?"

Gonsalvo at once took up the conversation.

"I have already," he said, "stated my opinion to his excellency that these papers should be immediately published to the world. We cannot alter facts. The position of the Anglican Church is that of a true branch of the Church Catholic, and the cloud, which through this interdict has hung over it during these three hundred years, cannot affect this fact. Its position is precisely that which it would have been had not this interdict been

pronounced. And as the author of the sentence repudiates it, and demands its revocation, what can we say but that the English Church is still Catholic and has ever been so ? ”

“This conclusion,” interposed the holy father, “is maintained by all her learned doctors to the present time. They have frequently and loudly protested against what they term the encroachments of the See of Rome on their liberties, and the independence of their Church. She had reason it seems.”

Said Bianchi, when the holy father ceased, “the interdict has not been revoked, for the declaration of Sixtus the Fifth impeaching and repealing it has not yet been published, and does your holiness consider that it must be published ? ”

“His excellence,” remarked Gonsalvo, looking steadfastly at the pope, “does not seem to realize the fact that a great sham and deception has been practised by Rome against the Anglican communion and sustained for near three hundred years. He says it need not be discovered ! ”

Bianchi coloured deeply to the very roots of his hair at this piercing sarcasm, and Gonsalvo sat on thorns when he thought of what he had said.

His holiness looked at both in turn as they sat before him. "Signors cardinals," he said, with manifest anger in his countenance. "We are not here to bandy words with one another, or to trifle with history. If I do not authorize the publication of these papers, the same stain rests on me which I regard as resting on my predecessors if they have been acquainted as we now are with these facts, and have not had courage to avow them. My honour and my conscience both disallow longer concealment. Justice to England must be done. Our cardinals there must be communicated with and at once recalled. A discovery such as this is, cannot be kept secret. Its suppression only increases and prolongs the mischief of the past, and it must end. We live in days of exhaustive criticism, destructive as some call it, and the critic has long been on us. The whole of our communion in England is schismatical. The

patent for the consecration of a cardinal archbishop of York whom I have nominated must be cancelled. It is no fault of England that her Church has been thus harassed by the mistaken zeal of our own communion. Our interference must at once cease."

Bianchi looked at the pope with open eyes of profound astonishment, and Gonsalvo looked at Bianchi with an expression of victory. The pope took the arms of the two cardinals and left the apartment leaning heavily on them. "Let us go," said he, "to vespers."





CHAPTER X.

FURTHER REVELATIONS.

THE despatch sent by Cardinal Gonsalvo reached its destination.

Mr. Workington at this time was not in office. It was the period preceding by some few years the formation of the cabinet in which he was serving in 1900 when the fate of the administration, as we have seen, was imminent.

Since the breaking-up of the brief Glibword administration, Workington had remained out of office. He looked to future rule, and was glad of the interval to reconsider his views and opinions, that he might prepare better for the position he one day hoped to fill. The views he had derived from Mr. John Freeman he, at

this period of his political career, felt to be crude, narrow, and one-sided, and he could only account for his adoption of them by the consideration that many as he had done are returned to parliament by a party to represent a party, and thus naturally fall into the prejudices and predilections of their set. Not till they have had time for reflection and gained the experiences which are hardly avoidable in the House of Commons, from the constant intercommunication between the members which prevails, do men of genius and talent find courage to begin to think for themselves, breaking through their partialities and discovering their mistakes.

In the several parliaments in which Workington had sat, he was a universal favourite and regarded by many as the coming man. He lost no opportunity of conversing with every one of mark and intelligence, and he enjoyed from his parliamentary position and connection the readiest access to every society, of which advantage he availed himself to the utmost.

From an early period after he had assumed

the responsibility of office, Workington had felt there was much in his opinions requiring the closest consideration. In his own borough, populous as it was, he had seen and heard but one side. Associated at first with a colleague of the narrowest mind who occupied a seat also in the same cabinet, a member of the straitest religious sect, he had commenced public life with views which he soon found to be of the most cramped description, and which he could not maintain, he felt, without becoming in the worst sense a determined partizan, for which he was not prepared. Such views, he soon discovered, however popular they were for the time in his borough, were alike distasteful and impracticable with a discriminating people like the English of all classes and all sentiments. He soon wanted and was determined to hear all sides. He liked nothing better than to meet with an intelligent friend of opinions opposite to his own; if totally opposite, so much the better, who would open his views frankly and unreservedly and support them with ready argument.

Workington loved this intellectual set-too. It was a bracing exercise for his own mind, and he felt and valued the advantage of it.

One quality was especially conspicuous in Workington's character, he hated party as mere party. He saw the patriotism of the few leading statesmen, with whom he had become associated, resolved itself into a mere aim to strengthen by party ties the so-called liberal cause, even though for the time it might prejudice the welfare of the country. Party with these men he found was first and country second. This shook his faith. The motive came so frequently and so distinctly to the surface, in almost every cabinet council in which he had taken part, that he was beginning to feel disgust to politics, and but for his own ingenuousness and aspirations after better things, he would have been satisfied to retire altogether from public into private life.

Workington was attending to his daily correspondence in his small but well-furnished library, surrounded by a multitude of volumes to which he constantly had recourse for refer-

ence, with Gonsalvo's despatch lying under his hand. He had read this despatch at first with an astonishment not easily described. "What might not turn up next?" he involuntarily asked. He had perused it a second and a third time with no diminished but rather increased surprise, till he was becoming incredulous of its reality. He had read it over at last so often that he could repeat it almost word for word, and was really beginning to see clearly the political bearings of the documents when a visitor was announced.

"Ah! Robertson," he exclaimed, rising from his chair and extending his hand cordially to his friend, "what has brought you from Northfield? This is most singular—look here: your name is down on my list to write to you this very day. But you must be tired with your journey, and will need some refreshment."

"No, thanks, I'm not at all tired," replied Robertson. "I had business in your town which I have transacted more quickly than I expected, so I came on before leaving to take

my chance of finding you. It's not often one can meet with an old school-fellow, scattered as we are all over the world. So I'm lucky this time."

"It is fortunate. I am very glad to see you. I had it in my mind, as I have shown you, to write to you this very day, and ask you to come to me. The coincidence is singular. Now, can you spend a few days here without inconvenience or returning first to Northfield? Had you come yesterday you would not have found me, which would have been vexatious, for I only returned from London last night."

"You have stuck to it pretty closely, then," Robertson observed.

"Well, I have given," said Workington, "a very close attendance at the House, closer than I intended. But the opposition it is said, I dare say you know, should be as watchful as the administration. To tell you the truth, I am getting a little disgusted with our leaders on either side; perhaps more with our own leaders."

"Yes!" said Robertson, "how's that?"

"Well," replied Workington, "party seems at the bottom and top of everything. The success of party appears to me to be really the great aim of statesmen in the present day. No one seems to be able to rise out of this narrowest of aims."

"In Glibword's cabinet," he continued, after a short pause, "in which, as you know, I had my first insight into official life, it was all party, party. His magnificent eloquence and indomitable energy were both devoted and confined to upsetting Lord Tokenham's government. He talked patriotically enough, but after all, as soon as he had come into power, he stultified us all by adopting very much of Lord Tokenham's measures, especially his foreign policy. And he had no definite policy of his own; and except for the pleasures of office, its emoluments and patronage, for the life of me I cannot see what was the use of disturbing the former administration."

"You speak truly," observed Robertson.

"The country gained nothing by the change,"

went on Workington, unable to restrain himself before his old friend ; "the Liberal party has lost cast by it. Many of us felt this, some of us felt it acutely, nothing but loyalty to one's chief kept tongues silent. For my part, I could hardly bear such bold chicanery, and I begin to fancy it was the first thing that set me thinking I might like to change some of my views."

"I am rejoiced to hear this confession," said Robertson, smiling at his old friend and school-fellow.

"Well, Robertson," resumed Workington, "I know your own opinions of old. Temple used to say at school you would never make a radical. But here I am then a disgusted and a somewhat disappointed, and perhaps a wiser man. Who can wonder at an administration, hoisted into power on such false pretences, being so soon turned out. One rapid re-action is sure always to be followed quickly by another, after which, in politics, things steady themselves a bit. I came down for refreshment and relief, and perhaps for a little further

meditation, away from ordinary influences and associations. I don't think with my present feelings I shall return again this Session."

"If you regarded yourself, my friend," interposed Robertson, with a slight touch of sarcasm in his voice, "as a delegate, you would, of course, feel bound to go back to your post!"

"Well, well," said Workington, good temperedly, "you long ago knocked that notion out of me, old fellow, and you were right. Those liberal six hundred in some boroughs, and three or four hundred in others, supporters of the candidates at the time, and as so many of us considered so valuable, were a great mistake. True, by their action, Tokenham's side was defeated and Glibword was returned to power, but they have continued to be pricks in our eyes and thorns in our sides, as many wise men predicted. Combinations of this, and any other kind, in political affairs are bad. They pin men to a particular line of policy, which is accepted as right, often without reason or proper reflection, and very frequently

from impulse and the exigencies of the moment, and the majority have no inclination, many not even the ability, to examine the premises, but simply give way to a leader and a cry; are, as we know, led by the nose, right or wrong, because they first suffered themselves to be misled by foregone conclusions. This is all bad, intrinsically bad, as I have come to see. Before another election comes round, I hope all these caucusses, as the Americans call them, will be broken up."

"If men were infallible," remarked Robertson, "it might be a desirable thing to associate them thus closely together, binding them implicitly to stand by their colours. We do this in military organizations, and the soldier yields unquestioning obedience to his commander. But in politics such a system must work evil in numberless ways. Men are constantly and necessarily liable to make mistakes and to come to wrong conclusions, but if a man feels that he must separate himself from such a marked and exclusive association, he is thought and judged to be a renegade. He has no

opinion of his own, so the country loses the advantages of what original minds might conceive. It is a system which manifestly suppresses individual inspirations, and the sooner it is abandoned and abolished the better."

"I have myself quite done with it," said Workington, "and will do my best to break it up. I quite see and feel the extensive mischief it is working, dividing the community everywhere into opposing sections, and setting them in deadly hatred against one another. It has injured unspeakably, but I trust not irreparably, the *morale* and power of the country in numberless ways. Can you stay?"

"I can for a couple of days, and with pleasure," said Robertson, "but not longer. Thinking I might be detained here in the matter which brought me down, I arranged accordingly, but I must return after that interval."

"Well," returned Workington, "it's short, but it must do, if you cannot extend the time. The fact is, I have for some little time past wished to consult you in a matter personal to

myself, and you know I trust your opinion and judgment. I have become doubtful, strongly and increasingly doubtful, of the non-conformist's position. I have been a dissenter from the Establishment for some years, as you are well aware, but I am dissatisfied."

"Don't say 'Establishment,'" interrupted Robertson; "the connection between Church and State is simply accidental and conventional. It does not affect the divine nature of the Church as an institution left by Christ; and whether connected with the State for secular purposes or not, to be separate from, and antagonistic to, the outward and visible Church of Christ, can only be regarded as schism, and, therefore, is a grievous sin."

"I was about to say," continued Workington, "that another matter of the very gravest importance, I think you will say when I mention it, has quite unexpectedly cropped up, so that your visit is most opportune. We can discuss, if you will, both subjects."

"By all means," replied Robertson. "But what is this other matter? Is it of a nature

such as the Non-conformist question, which I think we could soon dispose of? ”

“Read these papers,” said Workington, “and the short despatch with it. You will need no explanation as to what sort it is.” And Workington handed him Gonsalvo’s packet.

Robertson, as asked, quickly ran his practised eye over the documents, and it was apparent after he had read but a few lines his surprise was awakened. He read on to the end, and leaned back in his chair, when he had finished, with unconcealed amazement.

“Is this a hoax?” he at length enquired with a marked smile on his face.

“No hoax, most certainly,” replied Workington. “The packet came to me direct through the English *Chargé d’Affaires* in Rome, and I am well acquainted with the sender.”

“Gonsalvo,” repeated Robertson, his memory quickening in a moment: “is this the Italian priest I met at your house some years ago?”

“The same, yes,” said Workington.

"But he signs himself Cardinal," remarked Robertson.

"Yes, he has been made Cardinal since," said Workington smiling, "as some others have been."

"Did we not go with him to Roscott?" asked Robertson, "on the same occasion. I remember well he pestered me again and again on the schismatical position, as he called it, of the Anglican Church, but I was a bit too much for him, and he admitted that but for the Reformation we were a true branch of the Holy Catholic Church, and how could the Reformation make any difference in this position? 'Washing one's face,' to use Dean Hook's illustration, 'does not change a man's identity.' No doubt he had in his mind the sentence of papal excommunication. But we have always very properly treated that as mere rubbish from the first, and if these documents are genuine and true, as you affirm they are, it seems our view of the matter was not very wrong."

"At any rate, it has been honest and straight,

to say the least, in Gonsalvo thus transmitting the papers to me," was Workington's comment. "He knew me to be a Dissenter, and that I had not much dread of papal censures, or any faith in papal claims."

"Come, Workington," interposed the visitor, with the intimacy of an old friend, "I want some lunch. I suppose you will go and see the new Cardinal upon it, as you have been intimate with him so long. How does he bear his honours?"

Workington rang the bell and ordered luncheon. "Oh, he bears them," said he, "meekly, as he does all things, and they are a little stale now. But age is telling on him sadly, and the ascetic life he has led so many years has much changed his appearance."

"Indeed."

"His intellect is as clear and bright as ever. The love and devotion of all those around him are marked as they have ever been, and I may add his gentleness towards those who differ with him and disapprove his position, is still the same beautiful feature in his character. I

fear he cannot expect to live long. With those who visit him rarely, he always takes leave. It's rather upsetting, and when he sees the effect it has he excuses himself on account of his age."

The attendant announced luncheon, and the two friends withdrew to the dining-room.





CHAPTER XI.

SOCIABLE AND SHORT.

"I FEAR I have been very rude and neglectful," observed Workington, as the friends took their seats at the table. "I have forgotten for the moment to ask after Mrs. Robertson and your family."

"Thank you," replied Robertson, "we are all very well, I am happy to report."

"Your eldest boy must be of age?" asked Workington.

"Yes; I took him into partnership two or three months ago," said Robertson.

"Then come the two girls: are they married yet," Workington enquired; "or I should perhaps confine my enquiry at present to the eldest one?"

“Well, Mary is to be married next spring,” said Robertson, “there’s time enough for the other, Harriet. You will laugh when I tell you she is bent on going to Girton, when her brother goes to Trinity: but both Edward and Robert are still at our old school.”

“Rugby has very much increased in numbers since our time,” remarked Workington. “How many do you think they muster now?”

“I should say some five or six hundred,” replied Robertson. “I like all they do there, for studies and sports seem to be well balanced, and they turn out some splendid fellows, both at the universities and in public life.”

“I am glad they have dropped ‘hacking,’” said Workington. “I suppose old Rugbeians, like ourselves, would hardly know the place without the favourite recreation. But I always felt persuaded in our time that the foot-ball, as we played it, was far too risky, and certainly the continual occurrence of accidents bears me out in my conclusion.”

“No doubt,” assented Robertson. “Yet it

has been said that foot-ball and cricket prepared men to win our battles."

"Well, however that may have been," Workington remarked; "thank God we have fewer calls for soldiers. The world is growing wiser, and has ceased to be so enamoured of war."

"We may bless the European Confederation for that. There is little fear of war now that Russia and Turkey have had their wings so effectually clipped," was Robertson's explanation.

"Let me not forget," said Workington, "to enquire after my other friends at Northfield. How is your old chum, my good friend, Talbot?"

"Oh!" answered Robertson, "as well and as lively as ever. He does not look a day older since I first met him, some fifteen years ago. And he remains still a bachelor, as you do."

"You thought at one time," remarked Workington, "of putting your mills together and becoming partners: but you never carried out that scheme."

“There were strong reasons,” said Robertson, “against the plan when we went into the details. The hands were disposed at times to strike, and we thought that the numbers to which they had risen by our large extensions were safer and more manageable apart. Our scheme embraced the proposal of allotting to the men a percentage of the profits, and we resolved both of us to carry out that part of the plan, though we decided not to join partnership.”

“Ah!” observed Workington, with manifest interest, “and how has it answered?”

“Answered,” replied Robertson, “far beyond our expectations. We never hear now of any strikes. All the care of the men is to keep at work as closely and as briskly as they can and increase the profits of the mill and the consequent percentages they earn. Masters and men are thus eventually benefited.”

“How long has this been afoot?” enquired Workington.

“Between four and five years,” answered Robertson, “long enough to make all the mill-

owners in the place adopt it except one firm, the partners in which are obstinate, and, I fear, if they don't give way, it will end in their being obliged to shut down."

"They will come, it is to be hoped, to a better mind," observed Workington. "But on what basis did you start it?"

"It required a good deal of consideration; but after a time we found it very simple," Robertson replied. "I give Talbot the chief credit of the idea. The frequency of strikes at one time so perplexed us, threatening the very ruin of our trade, for our customers found they could never rely on having an order executed, and a regular supply of our goods, because a strike might happen, and was especially likely to occur if the hands came to learn that we had a heavy contract. It was inconsiderate of them and unjust, as well as selfish, and really injurious to themselves. They never saw that in the time during a continuance of a strike they lost an equivalent in wages which would take a serious time to recover. Our basis was simply this. We took out of our

day books what each loom and spinning machine would produce in a given time, and whatever became the excess of produce in that time, a corresponding percentage of wages was paid. The two shifts were treated exactly alike, and it was constantly found that, taking the whole working day at twenty-four hours, as much as twenty-eight and thirty hours' productions was the result. This gave an additional wage, varying from, say eight to twelve per cent. or thereabout, for each shift. It became at once manifest to the hands that to drive the mills up to full power, and *to stick to it*, was to their interest and advantage, and it was, of course, of advantage to the owner."

"It looks sound and good. Do you think this system," enquired Workington, "would be applicable to all works in which large numbers of hands are employed?"

"I do think it would," replied Robertson, "for it rests on a general principle, and with the necessary modifications and care, it assuredly might be adapted to meet most, if not all, cases."

"How about our production?" suggested Workington.

"A very proper question," replied Robertson, "but we find, practically, it raises no difficulty in the least. The market is generally a good test of production; and supposing you put the mills on half-time because the markets are glutted, the workpeople could secure the excess on half the time in the same way as they would do when the mill is in full work. The hands know the masters would not shorten time if they were not in danger of inflating the markets too much; besides, the workpeople know the state of the markets almost as well as we do."

"Well, I think you have satisfied me," said Workington. "It's cleverly worked out. May it be as widely adopted as possible! So that is the reason we never hear now of strikes in Northfield."

"The Church is very active in the town, and has been for years, and has much helped to make the people contented and satisfied with their lot."

"I should like to ask," said Workington, "after other Northfield friends; but I see by my watch I must start to keep an appointment. Would you like to accompany me, or will you go back to the library and write your letters?"

"Thank you," said Robertson, "I should like the walk, and we can continue chatting as we go, if I shall not be in your way."

"Not a bit. Tell me, has Lord Northfield or Sir Roderick Norman ever adopted the arrangements with their tenants, about which we were all talking so much when I was at Rushbrooke a year or two ago?"

"Oh, yes, and with the greatest success," replied Robertson; "but it's longer a good deal than you say. It's been in operation some four or five years. Sir Roderick adopted it in Ireland because he found the Land Act of '81 worked unsatisfactorily, and both he and Lord Northfield have it in full swing on their estates in England. We can talk about it, if you like, as we go."



CHAPTER XII.

MR. WORKINGTON OPENS MORE OF HIS MIND.

THE two friends were soon back and in the full swing of conversation.

"Let me tell you, Robertson," said Workington, "what first shook my faith in non-conformity. It was the singular position taken up by the leading non-conforming minister of this town."

"Yes, how was it?"

"He thought it professional, I suppose," Workington went on, "to be for ever attacking the Church and the clergy. His arguments were not always strong or sound, and he seemed to me unjust and uncharitable. Himself a man of good acquirements, in some things his

admirers thought him brilliant, and with a certain amount of learning of a particular sort, he was constantly contrasting his own social position with that of the clergy of the Church. This course was not very wise, nor was it complimentary to the flock he had gathered round him. It was nothing but jealousy. I was a little puzzled at first what to make of it, but he soon discovered to me his motives, which I must confess I considered of the meanest and most sordid nature."

"In some of his printed attacks on the Church," remarked Robertson, "for I think I guess whom you mean, he has very fully argued out this matter as a reason for disestablishment. He considers that *religious* equality means also *social* equality, but the two conditions have no sort of affinity to each other."

"No," continued Workington, "and this opened my eyes speedily and widely. I saw what he was aiming at. He wanted simply to pull down some that he might mount into their place. He wanted to take to himself and co-religionists the precedence which

socially has always been conceded to the established clergy. But if he would be on a social level with the clergy, as a first step towards ultimate precedence or supremacy, he must not only be fit himself to take rank with them, but his brethren must be fitted also to occupy the same rank. Socially, this seemed to me, as I have often told him, for the present at least, a most insoluble problem. Pooh! just think of a kid-glove methodist; he would make nothing but a contemptible prig. It would spoil the whole tone of non-conformity to turn their ministers into gentlemen."

"Churchman, as you know I am, and all my life have been," said Robertson, "I am quite willing to admit that in the advance of education, some improvement of late years has been made in the tone and character of dissenting ministers; but, after all, the masses have equally progressed in manners and education, and the effect has been very observable in two ways; that ministers of dissenting congregations of the better stamp are almost everywhere seeking orders in the Church, and that

those of the masses who feel that their ministers are inferior to themselves in education, are rapidly becoming Church people. You seldom see dissent in a third generation, if the family is rising in the social scale. There can be no doubt that dissent is every year losing ground. Nothing shows this more than that the methodist communities in America have sought bishops, and the result must sooner or later be that such sham bishops, with all the tail, must go by the board."

"They were wise, I think," remarked Workington, "in opposing a religious census in Glibword's time. We had a brisk discussion in the cabinet about it, and it was long before the administration could make up its mind. Outsiders, both in the House and among the public, who by profession were non-conformists or leaned to that side, especially the dissenting press, were angry beyond measure at the thought of a religious census, because they well knew that numbers would be dead against them. I gave my voice against it in the cabinet on very different and wider grounds.

I took it for granted that all the dissenting communities put together would be far outnumbered by Churchmen, and to bring out this fact prominently, in a census, would have sundered the two more widely than they are now separated. Politically and socially, this, in my judgment, was bad. Government, if it act wisely, should endeavour to narrow and diminish the breaches between classes and the sections into which communities are apt to fall. It is so much disintegration of the social body which should be carefully avoided; and so I voted against a religious census."

"I see," said Robertson, "and I think you were right."

"It was alike for the benefit both of churchmen and non-conformists not to be more distinctly pitted against each other, and now that another decade is nearly gone, the greater unanimity of the population, the less number of differences and sharp-angles, the absence of acrimony which we may everywhere observe, prove that the policy was a sound one."

"The country," remarked Robertson in his

turn, "has long been getting sick and tired of religious disputings. It was socially a wise as well as a pious inspiration of St. Paul which prompted him to direct Timothy as a bishop, that 'supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings and all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.'"

"No doubt, *authority*; there must be authority," said Workington, "and it is the struggle for this which makes men fall out. This is just the case with our Mr. Hale," he continued emphatically; "he wants a social rank which society has not accorded him, and to have an authority which he sees the Church enjoying far beyond any he can exercise even over his own congregation. 'A quiet and peaceable life' is impossible with such envious dispositions. I have long seen this, and it is fast making me a Churchman. I can't see if the Church were disestablished to-morrow, and all religious denominations were put on an equality, that we should be better off under

the spiritual rule and authority of the non-conformists, than we have been under the authority and rule of the Church of England."

"Long experience of the nation," interposed Robertson, "has proved that signal moderation has marked the Church's rule, and that her authority and supremacy in religious things are not exercised in any arbitrary or tyrannical manner. Where will you find a more liberal sway?"

"That is just what weighs, I must confess," remarked Workington, "so strongly with me. I look round and I can see nothing to prefer in this respect to the Church of England. Part the establishment from the state, and we shall have an instant struggle for supremacy among all the sects, in which I include the Roman. Nothing but indescribable turmoil and agitation would ensue throughout the country. No, I am sure as a politician, we had better keep as we are, and enter on the acquirement of no fresh experiences in these respects."

"The country," said Robertson, "it must not be forgotten, has already had ample ex-

perience of Roman supremacy, as well as some experience of puritanism. If you look at puritanism, now represented by the sects of Protestants, you find a desire for exclusiveness; and if you turn to the Roman schism do you not see how it is constantly forging chains for those who yield to its authority. We cannot believe that all who accept its rule believe *ex animo* its innumerable and strange dogmas."

"Most assuredly not," returned Workington; "there is no communion in the world in which men do not, more or less, think for themselves, and do as they like. However they may vary in their own minds from the dogmas of the community to which they belong, this liberty in its exercise does not necessarily require a severance from such community. You cannot make all men think alike, and mould them after precisely the same fashion."

"That," said Robertson, "would be aiming at an Utopian uniformity, which is as needless as it is impossible."

"The Roman system," said Workington,

smiling, "is wise in its generation. It is to let every one do as he likes, and rule those who will allow it."

"By the disestablishment of the Church," suggested Robertson, "the non-conformists, I fear, seek plunder. They are not only desirous of the social rank of the clergy, as you put it just now, but of their emoluments, which, they think, help to confer that rank, and certainly to uphold it."

"The clergy in any civilized community," rejoined Workington, "must be gentlemen; and the English clergy whom we encourage and expect to marry should have a sufficiency for their families. I am not one of those who think the clergy too highly paid. On the contrary, my opinion is that they are but indifferently remunerated for their work, looking at their position and the ranks of life from which, as a rule, they are drawn. If the public thought non-conformist ministers were of equal social value and consequence with those of the Church of England, don't you think we should have seen at some period of our history, an

endeavour made to endow them amply, as the Church has been endowed, by individual benefactors in successive generations ? ”

“ But many non-conformists,” remarked Robertson, “ regard Church property as belonging to the State and fairly to be appropriated and distributed.”

“ Do you really believe that ? ” asked Workington with a smile. “ Certainly you may have heard it so argued, as have I ; but I can tell you as a non-conformist, if I be still one, that they know very differently. It suits them to say so. It is policy that started the notion and induces them to maintain it. But they know better. They have some small endowments of their own, and do they regard them as State property ? Yet they have been derived precisely after the same manner as the Church obtained her property, from the piety of individuals. The Church owes not a fraction of these possessions to the State.”

“ That is no doubt so,” said Robertson.

“ The Lord chancellor of our cabinet offended me much, I remember,” continued

Workington, "in discussing the burials bills of Osborne Morgan, by maintaining that a benefactor who gave property to the Church gave it necessarily to the State. It was an allegation utterly groundless and indefensible. If I give to the Church, I give it for Church purposes; I give it whatever may be the relations between Church and State: but to say, as he did, that the State may consider it as its own, and deal with it accordingly, may suit a party scheme; it never can convince men of the honesty or integrity of any who have recourse to such subterfuges. The cabinet was determined to pass that enactment. It was a party measure, introduced and pushed forward expressly to gratify a party, and radical as I then was, I felt ashamed of such dishonourable courses. Every righteous man among the non-conformists was put to shame by it, and felt it would only pass to their subsequent injury. It opened the eyes of the country to the way the cabinet would deal with any property if it suited their purpose. You know my views of party, and this was an instance in which party

leaders were blind to the first principles of honour and sound policy : and the act, as you know, has been almost a dead letter from the time it was passed."

"It is only in a very few towns," Robertson observed, taking up the conversation, "that advantage of the Act has been taken. In Northfield, populous as we are, not a single instance has occurred. The clergy still bury the dead, asking no questions for conscience sake, and dissenters still prefer to see the remains of their friends carried into Church."

"I am of opinion," said Workington, with much emphasis in his words, "that England will never adopt disestablishment. The more I examine the question myself, the more strongly do I entertain this persuasion. What is any one to gain by it? Supposing the State chose to confiscate Church property to-morrow, the first feeling throughout the country would be that no property was safe. Some of the clergy consider they would be gainers by disestablishment. I don't think they would. Principally, they object to the Prime Minister

appointing the bishops, and kick at that truly farcical provision of *cong   d'elire*. They say they get bad and uncertain appointments under it. What security of better would they enjoy if in a vacancy the clergy in Synod made the election. It certainly sounds *churchy*, but practically it would be attended with numberless inconveniences and generally with bad results."

"I am not one of those churchmen," Robertson remarked, "who take this view. I much prefer the *cong   d'elire*. As the Bishop, by our constitution, unites in his own person a spiritual lord and a temporal baron (though few strictly are left), we certainly must admit that the crown alone has a right to create the baron; it must therefore, perforce of the circumstances, nominate the bishop. The fact is that the Church should always be in that efficient state that a prime minister could only appoint a fit and proper person. This is to suppose a general standard, I admit, of very high efficiency, but the reflection shows that the Church really has it in her own power, so

far to control the appointments that can be under the *cong   d'elire*. I cannot go in with you that the *cong  * is farcical. To my mind, it appears highly constitutional and right."

"Well, your view, Robertson, I confess," said Workington, "is a good one. You put it well. I never before met with it. Add to it, you may, public opinion, which never would admit of an egregiously bad nomination for a bishop. But independently of all details, I am satisfied that the separation of Church and State will never suit this country. If tried through some unhappy combination of political circumstances, it will be in punishment of our wickednesses, for they are great," continued Workington, in a thoughtful and solemn manner. "I should regard it as the demen-tation which God sends before destruction. Throughout our history have Church and State been one, with short exceptions, and these exceptions not encouraging. The unhappy times of the Commonwealth seem to me an awful warning for those who seek disestablishment. For a very few brief intervals before the

Reformation, Rome made good her encroachments, to keep the State for a time in subjection, but these times could not be called disestablished, but rather the contrary as regards the Church. It is impossible to study history and be insensible to these important facts. Our constitution has grown up as Church and State. The Church has been as much separated already as the State can bear. The repeal of the test and corporation acts, the abolition of Church Rates, the relaxation in favour of full toleration and religious freedom, these and the like enactments have put the Church as wide and as distinct from the State as our constitution will bear. We must not make the strain greater, and shall not if we are wise. The danger now seems to be that the House of Commons made up, as it is, of men of all opinions and views, religious or atheistic, should usurp an authority over the Church which, as professing one faith, she will never endure. The State must not forget its compact with the Church, to pass no statutes affecting the clergy without the previous

sanction of convocation. This dual government will work well, if there is no attempt at encroachment on one side or the other. In one instance there has been serious encroachment which has been attended with nothing but mischief; in the passing of the Public Worship Regulation Act,—but this has most justly long ago been repealed. That Act produced great commotion among the clergy, we all remember, and led to the half-dozen cases of persecution which occurred from the time of its passing till the end of 1882, or thereabout. We have happily learned to rectify mistakes in England without revolution. But I tire you.”

“No, no, not at all,” said Robertson, “but confess to me, dear friend, that for the future,” he continued, rising from his chair and clasping Workington’s hand, “I may regard you as a Churchman.”

Workington shook his friend’s hand cordially. “May God help me,” he said, and he added with a noble simplicity, “may I always be honest to my convictions, despise chicanery, and be of real use to our beloved country!”



CHAPTER XIII.

ROBERTSON RETURNS TO NORTHFIELD.

MR. ROBERTSON the next morning left Mr. Workington's house in unusually high spirits. He was glad to return home, and he was glad beyond expression with all his visit had produced. He was at the same time full of thought. How much that was useful and important had not been compressed into those two happy days he had so unexpectedly passed with his old schoolfellow !

He had quite enjoyed the conversations they had held together. He was inexpressibly delighted to find how changed Workington had become in his political and church views, and what a real experience of political life had

effected of good in his character. Knowing well, from years of intimate intercourse, the sterling merits and honesty of his friend, as well as the power of his clear and cultivated mind, he felt that, in any future administration in which he might be called to serve, the good of their country would be first considered, and not the mere advancement of party interests and aims. He was unspeakably refreshed as he thought of this.

The change thus elicited with regard to a man whom Robertson saw was fast advancing to be a statesman of the first rank was extremely gratifying. Robertson was surrounded in Northfield with men of a similar stamp, though they might be inferior to Workington in ability.

"I think his views most sound," he reflected within himself, as the train whirled him along to the North.

"Especially I like what he said on the relation of Church and State," he continued, meditating, and the better pleased because Workington had worked out a great deal of

all this for himself, though Robertson had himself suggested much. How few statesmen of our day endeavour to solve these leading problems, by hard thought and patient study of cause and effect. So many are content to go on in the line of policy in which they had been started, and so few have the moral courage to confess any change which might occur in their opinions, that Roberson felt it to be more than commonly refreshing to have heard what he had from Workington's lips. With the aid of a few such men, England was safe.

But the thoughts which most exercised him and occupied his mind arose out of the astounding announcement, as he regarded it, which Workington had received from Gon-salvo.

It was difficult to understand how such papers could have remained so long concealed.

It was equally difficult to guess how a Roman cardinal should make such a communication to one whose views, from personal acquaintance, he knew to be at variance with his own, and antagonistic to the claims of his own church.

It seemed almost incomprehensible—a fatuous proceeding for which he could not account.

What use he would make of these papers, Workington had not yet determined.

It was a wise resolution, he thought, not to seek at present to see the cardinal at Roscott, with the papers, but to wait and ascertain, if possible, whether any communication would be received at the college on the subject, from the Pope himself.

As far as matters stood, he knew not whether the information discovered by Gonsalvo had been kept secret at Rome. It might remain in Gonsalvo's breast. But it seemed improbable that it should so remain, or why had the Italian sent the documents to Workington? It was a puzzle. How to solve it he knew not. Workington, as receiver of the papers, would certainly hear more, and surely hear of it if it came to be known at Roscott, because the probability, in such a case, would be that Workington's name would be mentioned as the recipient of the papers in England.

Altogether the circumstance seemed full of

marvel. What would the Romanists in England think and do in the face of such a fact?

They must see how justified was the English Church in asserting its own independence of Rome; but the concession of religious liberty in England of which modern Romanism had so fully availed itself, and which had been attended with so much mischief and provocation to the National Church, was made futile by these papers. They would paralyze the whole movement. The Romish schism must forthwith end. But manifestly, very much would depend on the course adopted by the pope, and the directions which might be sent from Rome to the heads of the usurping church in England.

"The suspense," said Robertson to himself, "is painfully acute; but waiting, for a time, is clearly unavoidable."

Robertson had promised Workington to regard as confidential what had passed between them on these critical subjects, till he should hear from him that the time for action had come, then he was to treat it as a secret no longer.

The impression made by these papers seemed to Robertson to take a deeper hold on Workington than at first they had taken with himself; but Workington, he felt, was right in attaching so much importance to them. Workington had clearly pointed out the immediately important issue which impended, and as he travelled on, uninterrupted, he was trying to realize in his own mind the full force of his friend's prognostications. They had only one Roman Catholic chapel in Northfield; but the stir among the few ritualists which had involved the country in a short but bitter controversy, and had prejudiced the High-Church party, had been seized by the Romanists everywhere as an opportunity for more strenuously urging their claims, and they had done so with some success. Robertson felt that in the secret with which he had been entrusted, he held the means of upsetting altogether the Romanizing section in his town. But silent he would be till advised by Workington.

Workington, it was arranged, was to write to Robertson as soon as he had learned any-

thing further, and this assurance gave Robertson some peace of mind, for he fretted under the wrongs which had been done to his Church, and felt how difficult he would find it to be circumspect and silent. The crisis might come at any moment.

He was thus meditating when the train in which he travelled drew up at Northfield.





CHAPTER XIV.

ROSCOTT AND ITS INMATES ARE PERPLEXED.

Two days after returning home, when Mr. Robertson took in his hand his usual bundle of letters, hastily looking through the addresses, as was his custom, that he might determine which he would open first, his eye fell at once on one from Workington. To his surprise it bore the London post-mark.

But two days before he had left him at Polinghurst. How was this? A letter already!

Tearing open the letter, he learned that Rome had not remained idle or silent long with reference to Gonsalvo's discovery, and that the pope had already addressed letters to his chief adherents in England.

Workington wrote that the two cardinals had both received explicit commands from the holy father, and that he was himself mentioned by name as the only one outside their own communion who was cognizant of the discovery which had been made by Gonsalvo.

The political importance of the occasion had determined Workington to go at once to the metropolis. He addressed his friend from the Reform Club, and said he had not yet resolved on the precise course he should take, but that his inclination was strong to go straight to the Archbishop of Canterbury, in whom, however, he added, he had not much confidence, and then to seek the premier, though himself one of the opposition. As the possessor of important state knowledge, he deemed this a duty to divulge what he knew, since the pope had no longer remained silent.

"Excuse haste," he concluded his brief letter; "you will be surprised as I was, that a communication from the pope to the Roman-

ists here should so soon have been made. I don't want that the first intimation on this subject which reaches you should be gathered from the newspapers. The news cannot but be published extensively in a few days' time. I am better in London, though sorry to leave Polinghurst at this moment, for I think from the way my name is mentioned in the pope's letter, a copy of which was enclosed to me, I shall be sure to be requested to go over to Roscott by my friends in that college. As I am here, I shall gain a little breathing time before I visit the cardinal and others there. When I have anything worth your hearing I will write and be sure to communicate it.

"Always yours affectionately,
"J. W."

Workington added in a postscript, "you can, of course, now speak to any of your friends on this subject. I shall myself treat it as public. Tell Talbot at once. It seems that the Foreign Secretary has been notified."

In a few days we find Mr. Workington in

the private library at Lambeth Palace, with the archbishop and the senior chaplain.

"The papers," observed his grace, "are all very well, and very curious, Mr. Workington, and I thank you for permitting me to see them; but as yet, I observe little in them that in any way concerns the Church of England, or that can affect at all our position. Who at the the present day ever troubles himself about Sixtus the Fifth or his interdict; or would be interested in knowing that it is a sham? What interdict in fact is not a sham? And he produced one of those sardonic smiles for which he was notorious.

"I fear," said Mr. Workington, "that I have but imperfectly conveyed to your grace the view in which the whole matter presents itself to my mind."

"No, not at all," interrupted the archbishop, "I quite understand your meaning. You think it a proper subject for congratulation with the English Church that a papal interdict three hundred years old, should be shown to have been foisted on the world so much

longer than it was intended. But we don't care for the interdict one way or another, and I can't see how we are affected by it, or this discovery."

"It is surely of consequence to any communion," observed Workington, "to gain large numbers to its side."

"How so?" asked his grace.

"Though English Churchmen have justly thought nothing of this interdict," continued Workington, "the Romanists in England have: is it not the foundation stone of their position? and indeed your grace must agree with me that in the strength of this interdict the Romish schism was first set up amongst us, and on the same ground has come to be an antagonist to our Church of increasing power, successful, in late years especially, in alienating many churchmen from our communion."

"Pardon me, Mr. Workington," interposed the chaplain, "you speak of 'our Church' and 'our communion.' I was always under the impression you were a non-conformist, and, as reported, an old and active member of the

late Liberation Society. Am I mistaken? You seem now to show much interest in the National Church."

"May I explain?" asked Workington.

"Certainly," abruptly interrupted the archbishop, as was his wont: "but a plain reply, yes or no, to my chaplain's inquiry would have been desirable to say the least—and gratifying," he added; and the same sinister smile of the curled lip was renewed.

"I have been a churchman, your grace, for some time," said Workington in a subdued but dignified manner. "I left the ranks of non-conformity not without due and careful consideration; but as regards Rome, all well-disposed dissenters rank themselves, you must be aware, on the side of the Church."

"Is that so?" rejoined the archbishop, "I always thought they were very indifferent in the matter: didn't you, chaplain?"

But the chaplain remained silent, and Workington continued, "Dissenters have no desire to see the usurpation of the Church of Rome increased or strengthened in this coun-

try, and it was chiefly the feeling, amounting at last to conviction, that the separation of Church and State would, without doubt, have that baneful effect in England, which induced the council of the Liberation Society to abandon their work and dissolve the association, as was done a short time ago. The few who opposed this course were the Romanists themselves and a small party, nominally Church people, who were bent in getting the bishops removed from the House of Lords."

"You speak, then, Mr. Workington," remarked the chaplain, "as a churchman, and one who still upholds the union of Church and State, and it is your opinion that the papers you have produced, if I understand you rightly, will have the effect of bringing back the Romanists in England to allegiance with the National Church?"

"I can't see," interrupted the archbishop almost rudely, "what I can have to do with this, except, I suppose, that you and I, chaplain, may congratulate ourselves, if these papers be genuine and the story true, that we have

received from the holy father plenary absolution." And with the accustomed sneer and smile lighting up his face, the archbishop crossed his legs and threw himself back in his arm chair.

"Surely," said Mr. Workington, taking care to make his tone as indignant as possible, "the guidance of him who has been called by Providence to be the chief pastor of the English Church is desirable in such a crisis. I fear I intrude on your grace's time."

"Well, I'm always busy. Have you something more to say?"

"Your grace," replied Workington, "will, I feel sure, consider what I *have* said, and will find that there is more of importance in my communication than you seem now disposed to conceive."

"You are a statesman, Mr. Workington," added the archbishop, "and will better see than I can at present the bearing of this business, as opening up a new political situation. I should recommend you to see the premier."

"I have an appointment with the prime

minister on it this very afternoon," said Workington, and bowing with marked stiffness, he retired.

On reaching his apartments, Workington found the following letter on his table :—

" Roscott, S. Cicilian Virgin and Martyr,
" 18, &c.

" DEAR MR. WORKINGTON,

" Our dear cardinal having ascertained you are in London, desires me to write you and say how much he wishes to see you, should you soon be returning to Polinghurst.

" A packet he has received from Rome containing papers which he is told are also in your hands, has caused some perplexity, and it would be a comfort to him, he says, to see so old a friend, as he much values your judgment in cases of difficulty.

" I think it right to add that we much fear for our dear senior. He has been ailing a good deal, and the great age to which he has attained makes us all sensible that his reward cannot be far off.

"This news from Rome which has surprised and perplexed us all so much, seems to have disturbed him a good deal. But he sees the hand of God in everything.

"Always yours very sincerely,

"Richard W.

"The Right Hon. Joseph Workington,

"&c., &c., &c."

Workington expected this communication as we have seen.

He replied to it at once: "he hoped to be home in a few days, and would call early after his return. He had the papers to which reference was no doubt made, and believed that what they divulged would prove ultimately to be the cause of much happiness to their society. He trusted to find the cardinal in his usual good health."

The afternoon of that day was passed, the greater part of it in consultation with the Prime Minister at his official residence in Downing Street.

The two statesmen, though of opposite

politics, were as candid and cordial as possible.

"I have brought your lordship," said Workington, "the papers to which I have referred, and as I have copies of them in my portfolio, I will leave them with you."

"But," said Lord Saltburn, "I was hoping you would stay and discuss them together. I shall be glad to possess these copies and read them at my leisure, or would you rather that I ran my eye over them (I see they are short), while you are here, if you can spare the time."

Workington replied at once, "I can, if you please, readily give you an abstract of their contents, for I almost know them by heart; or I will wait with pleasure while you run through them. I have purposely set aside the afternoon for this business in case your lordship would wish to go fully into it."

Workington, though well acquainted with Lord Saltburn to whom, as a statesman who had held office in the former cabinet, he had been sometime known, could not resist contrasting his urbane and polished manners with

those of the archbishop he had so lately left. The difference was marked, indeed, between the address of the high-born English gentleman, and the pompous and self-asserting importance of the man elevated from middle-class life to a dignity he was ill-fitted to carry, with his Scotch antecedents; and this struck Workington the more, coming, as he had done, directly from one to the other. The one, he thought, no person accustomed to the ways of gentle life would ever pronounce to be a gentleman; while of the other, no one would describe him as anything else.

"I think I see the purport of these papers, Mr. Workington," said Lord Saltburn; "at any rate, enough to converse with you about them. Should I make any egregious mistakes, you must set me right. You were this morning, I understand you to say, with the archbishop. What does he think of it?"

"I don't think he at all grasped the situation, and he's so self-opinionated, as I have no doubt your lordship has discovered, that he sets very little store on what another may say. To

speak frankly, the impression his remarks left on my mind was that his Grace was non-plussed, as well as his chaplain. He seemed to make nothing of it, and, to say the truth, I was not sorry to end the interview, for his Grace (I must be pardoned for saying) is not the most agreeable man to converse with I ever met."

"But the papers," remarked Lord Saltburn, "on the face of them are of first importance. Such a situation as they indicate for England we could never expect to have seen."

"The archbishop and his chaplain both seemed to imagine," Workington continued, "that because the Church of England had always ignored the interdict of Sixtus, it signified nothing whether it was proved to have been removed or not. This to me seemed to be looking only at one-half of the question."

"Just so, no doubt," remarked the premier.

"The Romish Church," Workington went on, "had for three hundred years invariably acted towards England as an excommunicated country, and had accordingly kept up, more or

less successfully or unsuccessfully, an irritating invasion and encroachment which, if it did nothing else, unsettled many, and added another sect to the already too-much-divided community."

"Just so," again assented Lord Saltburn. "I wonder the archbishop could not see that and the corresponding advantage of such hostilities ceasing. What do the Romanists themselves say on the subject?"

"That remains to be seen," replied Workington. "My hope is they may be gradually reconciled to the National Church."

"A glorious opening for it!" remarked Lord Saltburn.

"A wise and forbearing policy," Mr. Workington went on to say, "on the part of the bishops might be the means of securing largely such a reconciliation. The Romanists will soon see they have no ground to stand on, viewing the situation on Catholic principles, which they profess to take for their guidance."

"It would help the Bishop of Chesterman to a good point in one of his next slap-dash

addresses," said Lord Saltburn, laughing and rubbing his hands.

"It is a fundamental canon of the universal Church that no one bishop may invade the diocese of another, and the admission that England must be regarded as a catholic country, with its National Church catholic, is of profound importance. Rome in communion has never been severed from the Gallican, Belgian, and other Continental Churches. Why should she have been separated from us? If there had not been this severance on her part, she would never have interfered with us in England."

"Much more is involved, I see," observed Lord Saltburn, "than settling a curious point of history. Rome lays an interdict on England, and from that moment, three hundred years ago, treats the country as if we had no church. This, after all these ages have passed away, is found to have been continued through a mistake, wilful or otherwise; it opens a singular state of things, certainly. So, according to Rome's own principles and contentions, she is

wrong, and all her acts and orders here since the death of Sixtus the Fifth have been distinctly and confessedly schismatical. What a mess ! ”

“That is so, assuredly,” said Workington. “How can they rectify the mistake except by abandoning the position ? The pope is serious in all he says respecting it. He will make no more bishops or cardinals for England, nor will he sanction further exercise of authority or function in those who remain.”

“It is very awkward,” remarked Lord Saltburn “We must soon know what the leading English Romanists think of the situation. Really, I feel sorry for their difficulties, though I rejoice for our Church and country. A very wide revolution in Church policy cannot but be produced by this strange eventuality. But years will be consumed before this old Roman schism dies out. The larger number may be difficult to convince, and many will be quite unable to understand and realize what has happened.”

“But the cessation of functions on the part

of bishop and priest, in all Roman communities throughout the country, will tell its own tale," said Workington. "The fact is the pope lifts the interdict from us and claps it on his own people."

"Yes, that's just it exactly," assented Lord Saltburn, rubbing again his hands and smiling.

"Church principles," observed Workington, "prevail strongly among all Roman Catholics, especially those of the English communion. Obedience to the pope is with them a tenet positively necessary to salvation. I am at a loss to conceive how they will meet the difficulty, except, as I just remarked, by frankly and at once renouncing their position; and, if they do this, what about their peculiar dogmas, some of which are distinctly denounced in several of the articles of our Church."

"I think," said Lord Saltburn, "the very widest toleration should be extended in respect to all dogmas; in respect, I mean, of lay-communion. Every Church claims the right of regulating its own ceremonial or ritual. Its *dogmata* are matters of faith to which as-

sent should only be required of the clergy, who minister in holy things, and hold preferments. No Council or Convocation can change these; and I must confess the articles you have in your mind appear to me a considerable stumbling-block."

"It's to be hoped," continued Workington, on the same point, "that wise heads will find their way out of it. But I think all attempts at legislation in the matter should be distinctly avoided, all thought of it repressed. Leave the bishops and clergy to deal with it as best they can."

"Oh, yes," at once remarked Lord Saltburn; "there has been too much intermeddling by the State in Church questions. My old colleague, in his last administration, put his foot into it. For the State to dictate in religious things, is to go back to the worst times of parliament. That Public Worship Regulation Act ought never to have been passed, to meet the silly cry of the day. It has been most wisely as well as justly repealed. Let the State deal with secular things.

Changed as the House of Commons is through the adoption of a religious freedom, against which no one can reasonably object, and composed as the House consequently is of persons of all religions and of none, it is time and it is right to surrender its assumed authority to legislate on matters strictly appertaining to the Church."

"Undoubtedly," added Workington, "the House would never think of interfering with the particular views of non-conformists, and the Church is entitled to the same non-interference and liberty."

"I quite agree with you," Lord Saltburn said. "We must have no State-meddling in this very delicate business. Let things take their course, at any rate for a time. Convocation may perhaps think fit to move for cancelling the obnoxious articles. Few believe the Roman dogmas now in the sense they were received at the time the articles condemned them. But nothing should be done in haste. The whole thing may work itself round."

"More than probable," said Workington, as

he rose to go. "If the State desist from interference, one result may plainly be expected that numbers among the non-conformists throughout the country will re-consider their own position also, in relation to the National Church, which is the most tolerant Church in the world, and we shall have more Unity in England, a Unity really glorious to contemplate, such as never before existed or has been attempted."

"Yes," said Lord Saltburn, extending his hand, "Unity on right principles, based on right views of toleration, not the Unity of the Reformation, which was but copied from Rome. All that has passed. In three hundred years it is right it should be so. Very glad to have seen you, Mr. Workington. Good day."





CHAPTER XV.

MR. WORKINGTON VISITS ROSCOTT.

IN a day or two Workington was home again.

Taking up the *London Times*, he read the following paragraph:—

“It is currently reported that a member of the late administration, of Cabinet standing, who is known to have left the ranks of non-conformity for the Church of England, has lately been closeted in close conference both with the Archbishop of Canterbury, whom he first saw, and the Premier. The object of these visits was to bring to the notice of these authorities certain papers of grave importance which

have been received from Rome, through our *Chargé d'Affaires* at that court, but privately and in confidence, in the first instance. We forbear to say more at present. We have not seen the documents; but it is confidently alleged in an open manner, by express direction of the Holy See, that these papers admit the utterly untenable and schismatical position in England of Romish Bishops and Priests. The best divines of our Church have long and fully controverted the assumed authority of the Pope in England, so that we are not surprised by the statement; but that the holy father, as he is termed at Rome, should himself make this admission and transmit to England the change of his convictions in respect of the true catholicity of the National Church, is an event which may and must fill the world with astonishment. The papers, it is right to state, only came through the hands of our *Chargé d'Affaires* at Rome for the sake of safe delivery; but it was understood that subsequently a full despatch to the Foreign Office would in due course be transmitted."

“So the truth is coming out,” said Mr. Workington, reflecting, as he laid down the paper. “From which of the two I have informed has this paragraph proceeded? I should guess from the office of Lord Saltburn, who seemed from his observations to desire to set a movement on foot with all expedition. Not from the archbishop, who appeared too much occupied by his own importance to think of anything outside himself. No, he has had no hand in it. If you want a real drag on the wheels of any church, commend me to a self-satisfied Erastian archbishop. I fear, with few exceptions, the whole crowd of bishops is of much the same kidney. I shall go to Roscott this morning and keep faith with them. They are sure to hear of my return. Perhaps it is noticed already in the local journals, and taking up the Polinghurst Daily Post, he read standing first under the heading of local news: “We have the pleasure to announce that our junior M.P. returned from London by the Mail train last night. We hope he will soon favour his constituents with an address, as it is

reported that he is the depository of very important news from abroad."

Workington rather winced at this. He thought the time inopportune for any deliberate public declaration of what he knew. Certainly he would make no disclosure, even of any general kind, till he had conferred fully with his friends at Roscott, whose feelings and wishes he strongly felt should be consulted. It was a business of great delicacy. Sooner or later, the facts must certainly come to light; but it would be a circumstance for ever to be lamented, if, by any precipitancy, before the heads of the Romish communion in England had resolved on the course they would adopt, the good prospect which he thought was opening for unity should be marred. Any impatience might be fatal. To let loose the press of all denominations on a matter such as this, was like "letting slip the dogs of war." There would be endless comment all round in such a case; sneering remarks without stint; uncharitable views unlimited; and beyond all, advice of every school and variety of thought,

making inextricable complications. All this might be avoided by proceeding quietly and judiciously, and allowing, before the public was enlightened, the Roman Catholics to select their own course, and decide what was to be their situation for the future.

Mr. Workington, on arriving at Roscott, found the cardinal ready to receive him. In the most cordial manner he pointed to a chair, but for the moment failed to find utterance. He next addressing the several priests who were in attendance, directed them to withdraw, desiring to be left alone with his visitor.

When the cardinal had sufficiently composed himself, he began. "I am glad you have come, Mr. Workington. You will tell me more about those papers. I must not say I am quite upset by this news which has been altogether unexpected. I have communicated the contents only to my friend who writes to you. We are shocked as well as astonished. Our countrymen may think we have known all along of the withdrawal of the interdict, have been parties to the wrong which has been

put upon England, and we hate, as much as fear, to be under so wrong and unjust a suspicion."

"I feel deeply for you all, cardinal," said Workington, drawing his chair closer to his aged friend. "My opinion you know of old that the sentence of excommunication was always unjustifiable and could not have been sustained, even in any Roman court, and was to be attributed to the tyrannical times in which it was pronounced. I have long thought that after three hundred years of alienation, the time had come when the churches should be again reconciled. This you have often, dear cardinal, heard me assert."

"Our position is truly," said the good cardinal, almost overcome with emotion, "a most painful one. Like you, I have long considered the reconciliation of the two churches most desirable, and perhaps practicable. Much in this large hope was it that in leaving, years ago, the Anglican communion I have lived and worked. The continuance of the interdict, with my views of unity, and on catholic principles, forbid me questioning the pope's autho-

rity; nor do I now indeed question authority, but allegiance to the National Church was plainly the duty of all catholics if the interdict had force no longer."

"I think," observed Workington, "that no one in their senses or with any spirit of charity in their hearts, would dream of supposing there has been any collusion in the case. The important thing is that these papers have so long lain in secret, hidden, it would seem, from successive popes, and at last brought to light accidentally, as it were, by Cardinal Gonsalvo."

"No, no," interrupted the cardinal, with more power in his voice and more emotion. "Nothing of this sort can happen by accident. I wish I could feel that the interdict had worn itself out, and that no question need arise as to the genuineness of these documents. Gonsalvo, when he was here, was for ever lamenting our separation from England. You must yourself have noticed this, for you knew him intimately."

"That is so," said Workington.

"But the pope, no doubt," continued the

cardinal, "will have thoroughly examined into the matter before causing the letter to be written which he has sent us."

"The pope," said Workington, "may himself have entertained the thought that this harassing controversy between the two churches should cease." Moved in some degree by the suspicion which the cardinal had thrown out, he left the suggestion here.

"Well, this is just possible," confessed the cardinal. "Liberal journals of all sorts, we know, have lamented schism and separation, and desired unity, while some have urged that no customs or differences of ritual should separate Christian men. The difficulty has ever been how to bring unity about. But I cannot permit myself to believe that a trick would be adopted for such a purpose. No, that is impossible."

"May I ask if the holy father," inquired Workington, "in the letter to which you refer as having received from him with the papers, suggests any course for those to take who may be of his communion in England? I hope I

am not intrusive in seeking information on this point. If I am, pray do not indulge me."

"I am glad," replied the sorrow-stricken cardinal, "to talk over this most painful matter, Mr. Workington, fully and without reserve, with so old and valued a friend. The father leaves us here to consider our own situation, which he regards as no longer catholic, and to take our own course. Only he declares he will appoint no more bishops and cardinals for England, so that time must destroy us, if nothing else."

"The situation, indeed," said Workington, "is most trying and painful; but if the Anglican communion be thus demonstrated to be the true branch in this country of the Catholic Church, as Catholics your membership is in this communion."

"It has been argued with great power no doubt," observed the cardinal, "by English doctors and theologians of past as well as modern times, that it is lawful in all members of the Church of England to hold all catholic doctrines. A few there are, and have been,

who say some of the articles condemn this view, and seem to think that the protestantism of the Reformation was opposed to true catholicity. A very dear friend of mine, who sticks to his Anglican Church and views, has very ably indicated the former position, and regards the Reformation almost exclusively from its secular and national side. He holds that the several articles I have in my mind condemn only perverted doctrines, which in the Tudor period were held by a few of our (Roman, I mean) extreme controversialists."

"I recollect, much of this," remarked Workington, "is to be found in his letter to the late Bishop Blomfield."

"I confess," continued the cardinal, "I dislike anything which in the least appears like special pleading in relation to sacred truths. And those authoritative declarations of the Anglican Church in her articles, have always proved a stumbling-block in my way, and I still see and feel them in that light."

"But in the Roman Catholic Church, as in our own branch of the Church Catholic, if

errors arise, as all your theologians admit may be the case, what is the course the faithful should take?" inquired Workington, with a strong emphasis. "The errors may not be of a kind involving distinct heresy, and requiring the equally distinct and authoritative censure of the Church; but the duty, I apprehend, especially felt by members who are allowed to be sound is to combat and refute errors, while variations from the truth within certain limits would not be regarded as supplying reasons for withdrawing from communion with the Church. Your present position, cardinal, appears to me to be something like this: assume that through the discovery of these papers and the course taken by the pope, you are reconciled to the Anglican communion and you object, rightly or wrongly, to certain articles in her declaration of faith, and to some uses in her ritual, is not your course simple enough, to protest against what you consider wrong, and to endeavour to get it altered and put right? The existence of any error, or supposed error, in the Church's faith or ritual is scarcely a justification on

catholic principles for separating yourself from the Church's communion."

"There is great force, I admit," returned the cardinal, "in the argument you employ. I have often discussed it here. While we believed that Rome had authority over the Anglican Church, which the members of the English communion refused to allow, we had no difficulty. Our duty we regarded as plain, to submit to the authority of the Holy See. But now the whole case is changed. Rome tells us, what she denied before, that the English Church national is a true stem of the Church Catholic, and that for the time to come she will be treated by Rome as such. If we, however, still think you in error in some things and are to quit the Church because of them, we have no place on which to set the sole of our feet."

"Certainly," observed Workington, "you are in that painful difficulty."

"The very catholic principles we hold," the cardinal continued, "would condemn us if we refuse to communicate with the Church

in our country which the pope pronounces to be catholic. The only course seems submission, as you say ; but we accept communion because we have no other. We go into controversies which must be life-long for all of us, and of which we thought we were free when we left the Anglican Church and joined, as we considered we had done, the Roman, to us, at that time, the only catholic. It seems a strange retribution, and is very difficult to bear."

"In leaving the Anglican Church, it always seemed it me," remarked Workington, "that as catholics, pardon me for saying it, you were not fulfilling your duty. The plea on which men leave a church because they cannot agree with all it teaches, has always appeared to me most groundless and erroneous. Such a plea—the plea of difference—would justify every non-conformist of the hundred sects in this country in breaking the unity of the Church. I maintain that unity may be infringed under no condition. It is seeking peace through selfishness. What suits the individual mind it takes. No order of Christ is respected, but

an order is set up purely of man's invention, because it suits him and he likes it. Our Lord could never so have ordered His Church. This consideration it was which in a great measure determined me to leave dissent and become a Churchman."

"Pray go on, friend," said the cardinal, "I like to hear you reason this out."

"I felt and feel still," continued Workington, "that separation under any plea is beginning at the wrong end. Man's duty is to continue in the ship. As St. Paul exhorted the soldiers when danger threatened those who were sailing with him, 'except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved.' Directly danger comes, through difference of opinion, men launch a boat for themselves. Duty bids us all remain in the ship. What there is to correct is always open to discussion *within* the communion; what is proved to be incorrect is always open to the Church to alter. Errors do not get eliminated, nor can they, but become stereotyped, when differences are made the ground of setting up new communions and

establishing new connections. And thus it is that errors continue from generation to generation, and under such false principles and proceedings can never be extirpated."

"Pity and pray for us, my dear friend," said the cardinal; "we need the sympathy and help of all good men. Pray that we may have light and sound guidance. Pray that all may conduce to the glory of God and the benefit of the Holy Church."

"You will come and see me again," he added, as Workington rose and took his leave.





CHAPTER XVI.

RENT DAY AT NORTHFIELD.

ALL was bustle and turmoil inside and out the Grantley Arms Hotel in Northfield, where the farmers and other tenants of the extensive estates of the baron were assembling to transact the business of the day. Dull and cold was the season, and a drizzling rain wetted the coats and damped the spirits of the comers.

Mr. Thompson, the lord's agent, was already at his post in the large assembly room of the hotel, with his books and papers around him, and a clerk on each side. An open cash-box stood opposite him into which the money was put as paid by the tenantry.

Men were elbowing each other and struggling to get first to the counting-table, some good humouredly trying to pass to the front, others grumbling at the crowd which seemed ever increasing till the room could contain no more; and in the passages and on the staircase lead-to the chamber others stood conversing, closely packed together, waiting their turn and ready to seize the first opportunity of getting inside where the crush was.

Paying the rent would occupy the whole day till dinner time, which was fixed for five.

Meanwhile the house was open to any of the tenants who needed refreshments, of which not one availed himself to excess.

Serving the tenants kept Mrs. Giles, the landlady, a buxom widow of forty, so closely occupied that she had but little time to run now and again into the kitchen to hurry on the cooks and maids with the preparations required to satisfy three hundred, which she rightly computed would be about the number Mr. Thompson in the evening would entertain.

In the yard the ostlers and helps were re-

ceiving the guests as they arrived, and disposing of the horses and traps as best they could. Long practice on market-days had given them experience to pack well and economize their limited space: but many a young farmer to secure, as he hoped, better accommodation for his nag would take away his character and warn the ostler of its kicking propensities, though a more gentle quadruped there could not be, and declaring he had better be put by itself for fear of accident. The harmless trick, which the ostlers were of course thoroughly up to, was tried for a time by several, only to find when they returned to look after their horses that all were indiscriminately standing together as closely as they could stand, three in a stall. "You know, gentlemen," observed the head ostler, "when we packs 'em close like this its safest, 'cos there's no room to kick."

Mr. Thompson announced before commencing business, "that though the year had been an unusually good one, to confirm which he would appeal to Mr. Wilkins, whom he was

happy to see in the room, he being the largest occupier on the estate, he had the pleasure to tell them his instructions were to remit 10 per cent. to the tenantry."

Three cheers were instantly called for Lord Northfield, and given with the greatest heartiness.

Continuing, Mr. Thompson added, "he was now prepared to begin business, and would give receipts in full for the rent, deducting the 10 per cent. or two shillings in the £."

Mr. Wilkins, who was fond of spouting in public when he had the opportunity, stood on a chair and began :

"Gentlemen, you have heard Mr. Thompson's gratifying announcement, which no doubt has taken us all by surprise. For my part, I brought the whole rent, expecting to pay in full"—"so have we all," resounded from every quarter of the room—"and it's very generous of our good lord to make any reduction. In bad years many of us know he has taken off as much as 20 per cent. I remember in one year as much as 25 per cent. was remitted ;

that year was a very bad one. But I mustn't interrupt the proceedings by a long oration" (this was a very favourite expression of Mr. Wilkins, who always had it handy when he had not much to say), "and we can all talk it over with each other at dinner. I quite think that after the full harvest we have had 10 per cent. is a very handsome consideration" —"hear, hear, so it is," on all sides—"I will only add, that for my part, I am quite satisfied with the new regulations on the estate. We have tried them now for several years and they work well and quite fairly, in my opinion, between man and man"—"So they do, so they do," was reiterated on every side—"I hope," he added, "we shall always go on as well."

"Now then, gentlemen," said Mr. Thompson, "there's no time to lose. Let us make a beginning, and get done as soon as we can. Don't let's spoil the dinner by keeping it waiting. It's ordered, as usual, for five o'clock. Who's first?"

Mr. Wilkins, commonly known as Squire

Wilkins, as he happened to be standing close to the agent, made his account at once.

"Take off the ten per cent.," said he, addressing Mr. Thompson, "and how much will the money be?"

The clerk took the figures out of the book: "1,800 acres, third of average £1, £1,800, less £180 is 10 per cent., £1,620. There's the receipt. Thank you;" and he handed the money across to his colleague to count, while he gave attention to the next comer. Thus went they on through a list which seemed interminable till half-past twelve o'clock, when Mr. Thompson called a halt, and declared it was hard work, that he was getting tired and must have some lunch, though the two clerks had done all the work, and he had merely sat by, looking on and chatting, first with one, then with another.

After lunch the work was renewed, and at five minutes before four o'clock all had accounted, and the chief clerk was following Mr. Thompson with the cash-box across to the Northfield Bank.

"Well, Mr. Jones," said Mr. Thompson, as he passed into the bank and saw the manager standing before the counter, "I was afraid at one time we should hardly finish before your doors were closed for the day. You'll come across and dine with us, I hope. I expect Mr. Bell, the vicar, and one or two more."

"Oh thank you, yes," replied the complaisant Jones, who had not been long at the bank, in his most agreeable voice; "I shall have great pleasure, Mr. Thompson. I number many clients from Lord Northfield's tenantry. They are a thriving people."

The rent money was paid over the counter, and after exchanging a few remarks, Mr. Thomson returned to the hotel to await the time when dinner should be announced.

As he entered he was accosted by Mrs. Giles, who, regretting that the weather was so dull, and having a first regard for the inner man, enquired "whether he would take anything before dinner?"

"No, thanks," replied Thompson. "You are laying covers for three hundred? The

vicar and Mr. Jones from the bank, with one or two more probably, I expect to join me. These will sit with me at the cross table. The evening's improving. The rain is passing off, and soon after dark the moon will be up, and we shall have a fine night, I think, after all. I always pick for rent day, a day when the moon is near or at full; it makes so much difference for the tenants in returning home when it is light instead of dark. One can always be sure of the moon, but not of the weather."

"John," said Mrs. Giles, calling the head waiter, "take Mr. Thompson into the front drawing-room, and when Mr. Bell and his other friends come, show them up to him."

"Yes, ma'am," said John, and bowing obsequiously to Mr. Thompson, he moved away, conducting to the drawing-room as instructed.

It was a room of good dimensions. There was a large and cheerful fire burning in it, and the whole air of the chamber was one of substantial comfort. The furniture, though old-fashioned, was solid and good. Easy arm-

chairs of large amplitude predominated. On how many similar occasions had not Mr. Thompson been in that room! He had been agent in the old lord's time, and for nine years in continuation he had served the present baron. "Was it forty years," he asked himself, "in all?"

"It was forty years that very day," he reflected, for he had been joint-agent when twenty-five years of age with his own dear father, who had served two generations of Grantleys before that time. What changes had he not seen! Every farm had been vacated several times; but in how many were there not the same names, the tenants being children or remote descendants of former occupiers.

He was sure there was not a happier community in all England!

For good landlords commend me to the great territorial proprietors, the aristocracy of the country.

A man of large estate can afford to be a benefactor. He can meet the times. He can

be generous. He can remit 10 per cent., 15 per cent., 20 per cent., according as seasons require it.

But the man of mean estate, he must grind and pinch, and pinch and grind, to make with himself both ends meet, which means that not one of his dependants can have a chance.

And the poor agent of such a man must bear all the grumbling and do all the grinding, and take less than others for his commission and labour, or "I'll find some one else to do it."

No, no; give me the aristocracy, with the broad acres.

Strengthen the House of Lords.

As vacancies may happen, put up the wealthy commoners.

The country with them will stand till kingdom come, and be prosperous into the bargain.

Mr. Thompson had hardly gone through these cogitations and confessions of his political and social creed, when Mr. Jones, the banker, was announced. Next followed the vicar, and in a few minutes, two or three more, all whom Mr. Thompson had invited.

Addressing the waiter, Mr. Thompson said, "When Mrs. Giles is ready and the tenants are all seated, let us know and we will go in." Looking at his watch, he continued, "I see it is only a few minutes to five."

At five o'clock punctually, as the clock was striking in the old church tower hard by, and chiming its modern carillon which had not been long erected, the whole party sat down to dinner. A merry party it was. The hospitality was that of the north of England. Three hundred tenants occupying the three long tables running the whole length of the assembly-room, with Mr. Thomson and his invited guests sitting at the cross table at the top, made up the company.

The room was amply illuminated with electric light. The tables were tastefully decorated with such flowers from Rushbrooke Hall as the season could supply, and they groaned with an abundance of viands and vegetables of all sorts.

At the gathering of the rents for the winter half-year, the custom was to provide dinner

for the tenantry as on this occasion. In the spring all were assembled at Rushbrooke Hall, where Lord and Lady Northfield received their dependants at a garden party, to which the sons and daughters of the farmers were invited as well as the farmers and their wives.

The party at the earlier season of the year was the more popular, because more sociable, and many were the marriages resulting from those gatherings, at which the whole country side, of both sexes, came together; many neighbours and their families from distant parts of the estate meeting perhaps for the first time.

After the vicar, Mr. Bell, had said grace, the noise and clatter of knives and forks, mingling with the hum of the guests as they exchanged their views on any subject, became almost indescribable.

All were in the highest spirits. All regarded themselves as fraternal, as being common tenants on the Northfield estate.

All alike praised the just and righteous management which had been adopted, and

which, year by year, gave evidence of its soundness and excellence.

An hour passed in this way, the dishes indicating at the end of it the good health and appetite of the Northfield tenantry.

The custom of drinking toasts after dinner had been long exploded, but a few short speeches were made by those who sat at the upper table, chiefly on subjects of local interest; after which Mr. Thompson returned with his guests into the drawing-room, for tea and coffee.

This was the sign for the tenants to depart, and in a few minutes they passed out of the assembly room into the stable-yard, preparatory to setting out for home.

Mr Jones, addressing Mr. Thompson, asked whether the present was the third or fourth year of Lord Northfield's new arrangements with his tenantry? "Mr. Bell and I," he said, "have been talking at dinner on this subject, and the vicar maintains that it is at least the fifth year since the new arrangement came into force."

"The vicar is quite right," replied Mr. Thompson. "The time since we started the plan has slipped rapidly away; but I don't think," he continued, "that another five years will pass over our heads before we find it generally adopted throughout the country. Well, as it has given the greatest satisfaction among the tenants, we never now know of any grumbling, and it meets all seasons alike. But we may not take the credit to ourselves of starting it. Mr. Bell, our vicar there, induced Sir Roderick first to adopt it in Ireland, and he found it answer so well that he applied it to his own estate here, and then we followed suit."

"That it answered well in Ireland," said Mr. Bell, "was very satisfactory: for Glibword's Land Act failed lamentably, because of the agitation of the Land Leaguers whom it failed to conciliate or pacify. The suggestion came in the nick of time. Perhaps for this reason it took in Ireland so well, that there was no law to enforce it. That it secured its end, and established the landlord's popularity, was proved by the fact that year after

year when Sir Roderick went for his two months to Ireland, he escaped assault himself of every kind, his cattle too were unmolested and unharmed; while on his neighbours' territory outrages were frequent and desperate. One landlord was shot and killed. So disturbed was the whole country, except on Sir Roderick's estate, that his immediate neighbour at Castlemarten, one of the largest proprietors in County Cork, Mr. O'Callaghan, a true Irishman and sympathiser, had almost resolved to leave the country altogether from the perpetual terror Lady Althæa his wife suffered."

"I have heard a good deal about this plan," said Mr. Jones, "in various quarters, but my notions of it, I fear, are very hazy."

"The basis of the arrangement," Mr. Thompson observed, "is that we have *no fixed rental*. This is the secret of the whole matter. As landlords, we meddle as little as possible and leave things very much to settle themselves."

"But you must tell Mr. Jones," remarked the vicar, "that you have a specific rule by which the arrangement is regulated. Though

the basis is no fixed rental we have an agreement to show how the rent in each year is determined."

"Yes, I am coming to that," observed Mr. Thompson. "We adopted a plan suggested by our vicar, Mr. Bell, which he persistently maintains is not his own. He fathers it, very unselfishly, on the late Lord Tokenham, who, nevertheless, never put his doctrine into practice. Lord Tokenham many years ago explained that, in his view, the value of land should be calculated for the landlord at one-third of what the land produces. He reasoned that the produce of all land should be divided into three parts: one part to be paid to the owner, the second part to the tenant, and the third part to be expended on the land in manures, improvements and so forth, to keep the farm, as we say here in the north, in good fettle. But here Lord Tokenham stopped. The practical application of this axiom of the value of land is undoubtedly due to our vicar. He reasoned that if Lord Tokenham's valuation is correct, and if the produce of all land should

be apportioned into three parts as it varied every year, according to the season, the division should be calculated every season. This, we find, answers everything and satisfies everybody."

"Never mind," said Mr. Bell, taking up the conversation, "who is entitled to the credit of having introduced it. Unless Lord Tokenham had suggested the threefold division, the idea had perhaps never entered my head. The old plan was something like this: to take an average of the value of what a certain farm produced, say during ten years, then dividing that average by three, a third of it represented the rent to be spread over the ten years in equal sums. Say a thousand pounds represented the produce in ten years of a certain farm, then three hundred and thirty-three pounds six and eight pence would represent the rent for ten years, or a rent each year for the landlord of thirty-three pounds six shillings and eight pence. But owing to a succession of bad seasons, the calculation was fallacious. Another plan was for a surveyor and valuer of land to

examine the farm thoroughly and give his opinion, from experience, what it was worth. This, like the other was unsatisfactory; the latter especially so, because no two farms are alike, and in such a rule-of-thumb computation there was really no average. Tenants making such arrangements always felt themselves over-reached. I have merely simplified the division, and as you hear from Mr. Thompson, there is everywhere satisfaction and content. I cannot see how it could be otherwise."

"Are the details, as you put the matter," inquired Mr. Jones, "at all difficult to carry out?"

"Not in the least," replied Mr. Thompson. "Let us look for a moment at some of them. First there is the produce to be estimated. We take the farmer's own return, not because we trust altogether to his honesty, though we are of course careful in selecting our tenants; but to the fact that it is to his own interest to be honest. Secondly, on a large estate any grave discrepancy in estimating the annual

produce would necessarily come to light, because it can so easily be compared with all the averages of the estate."

"I see that," said Mr. Jones.

"You may perceive," Mr. Thompson went on, "that we thus trust the farmer to know and understand that the more he produces the more he will himself receive and retain to lay out for improvements and cultivation."

"I should be glad to hear an illustration," said Mr. Jones, "if not tiring you."

"Oh, certainly," and Mr. Thompson proceeded.

"Take this instance: a farm of 150 acres of land produces say, this year, a value of £450, giving an average of £3 an acre. Now that value supplies £1 for the lord per acre, £1 for the tenant, and £1 for the farm per acre, to be laid out. He is, therefore, to pay the landlord £150, to keep £150 for himself, and to retain another £150 for his agricultural purposes."

"Well, I think I could here take a sound objection," observed Mr. Jones.

"No, no, my friend," urged the vicar: "hear him to the end."

"But next year," Mr. Thompson continued, "having laid out honestly and with good judgment on the land the £150 retained for that purpose, the same farmer in a fair average season makes his value to be £600, or an average of £4 an acre. He consequently takes for himself £200, retains £200 to lay out as before, and hands to the landlord the remaining £200. You see, it is to his own advantage to improve his land, or next year he may suffer: and if he is dishonest, his land will go back in produce."

"Well," observed Mr. Jones, "that seems quite practical. But how do you manage in the case of bad seasons?"

"A very proper question," replied Mr. Thompson, "so, let us continue an illustration on the same farm. The next year, we will suppose, the season to be very bad, and the produce has receded to the sum first stated or less, but say £450, or an average of £3 to the

acre; the division is again reduced and the farmer feels no injustice, he having to pay only the reduced rent. Now be sure it is the continual strain upon a farmer to pay a *fixed* rental, which some years will not produce, which he feels and which galls him. This under the old system was constant, the same in bad years as in good or fair, is practically bad policy. Sometimes the farmer has to contend with a succession of seasons indifferent and bad, as was the case for six or seven years, I remember, up to and inclusive of 1881, in that case, with a fixed rental, the farmer was certain to break down."

"I recollect those seasons very well," Mr. Jones remarked, "I was then a young man, and living in what was thought a flourishing agricultural district, and the distress was serious."

"In the new system," Mr. Thompson continued, "the encouragement to the farmer is that he pays only in fixed proportion what it is ascertained the land produces *each season* in the proportions I have mentioned. He has

therefore every inducement to keep up the good condition of his farm, for the higher the state of cultivation, the more, in proportion, will his own savings be; and the landlord gives him yearly a third of the produce for improvements. The landlord too profits for the same reason. In fact, landlord and tenant have but one interest, and both profit by fair play, by this arrangement of no fixed rental, and payment by thirds according to what is produced."

"I must admit," said Mr. Jones, "there is much force in your statement. Its soundness I begin to see. I understand much more clearly than I did the principles on which you proceed. There are, however, I must confess, some objections to the system which occur to my mind. There may be nothing in them, but another time, Mr. Thompson, when you have leisure and inclination, I should like to discuss them with you. It's getting late now, and I must be off."

Mr. Thompson, who was beginning to feel fatigued after this long disputation on farm

rents, was not sorry when his friends wished him good night.

“We will have another go in some day, if you like,” he said as he shook Mr. Jones’ hand.





CHAPTER XVII.

UNITY RESTORED IN THE WESTERN CHURCH.

THE information which they had received at Roscott from the pope, and the course which the holy father intended to pursue towards the English Church, was quickly circulated through the whole Romish communion in England.

The bishops of that communion had held many conferences and had at first found it difficult to agree as to the measures they should adopt. The priests of the same church were strangely divided among themselves, many of them wholly unable to realize what had happened.

Some were for remonstrating with the pope;

others strongly advanced that the cardinals, as his more immediate representatives, should proceed to Rome, see the holy father and represent the state of confusion into which the discovered papers and his missive had cast the whole of their communion.

Many urged that as the interdict was at an end their standing ground was absolutely gone, and not a few made up their minds that as the Anglican, as it was now admitted and declared by the pope to be, was the catholic church of the country, they would examine its doctrines and ritual more closely, and, if possible, seek employment within its fold.

Did not the National Church, these argued, hold the three creeds?

Did she not "rightly and duly" administer the Holy Sacraments?

Did not her ministers, both by their life and doctrine, set forth the true and lively word of God?

Whatever differences there might be between the two churches, in all spiritual and apostolic things were they not one? All

things necessary to salvation they undoubtedly held.

The use of the vernacular tongue had long been met in the Roman communion by giving translations of the offices in parallel columns with the Latin text. Rome had therefore herself given way, they must admit, in the discipline in this respect of the English church, which required that the sacred offices should be said "in a tongue understood of the people."

A closer communion, they considered, might in due time see the differences softened and ultimately removed, and thus would they be justified in the step they contemplated taking.

It soon became manifest in Roman congregations that worshippers were falling off in great numbers, that the chapels were in fact in danger of becoming empty.

The laity of the Roman Church were for the most part incensed beyond measure by the exposure to which their communion had been subjected by the discovery Gonsalvo had made, and the pope had acknowledged.

They felt irritated in no ordinary degree that they had for three hundred years been occupying the position of schismatics; and to what sneers and reproaches, they reflected, might they not be subjected in their intercourse with English Churchmen?

There could be no gainsaying what had happened, and what was plainly their duty.

They could only look to time to soften their unexpected trials which had come on them through the irrepressible ambition of the Roman See, and make at all tolerable their novel position in the church.

But it was plain now that, as catholics, they must be members of the Anglican and National communion.

To describe the natural exultation of the sound and catholic portion of the English clergy would not be possible. The victory was remarkable in every way. Their long, steady, and patient resistance of the papal usurpations; their unvarying persistence in maintaining the catholicity of the National Church, now fully admitted by the Roman

community and authorities, was a cause for unspeakable gratification and thankfulness.

But as might be expected from a body of English gentlemen, the issue, surprising and gratifying as it was, was made no subject for vain boasting. In no pulpit in the country was it treated in any unbecoming tone. It was seldom, indeed, noticed, and never in a vaunting or imperious spirit; always in a courteous and charitable temper. The English clergy felt their gain to be great, but they also felt that their duty was, as it was their wish, to receive their erring brothers with the fullest consideration, that diffidence and reserve might oppress, in the smallest measure, those who were returning, that the step they were constrained to take so unexpectedly should be as easy and little painful as possible.

But there were some few in the English Church whose charity toward Rome in her fall could not be awakened. In consequence of their extremely narrow views, at all times only too conspicuous, they repudiated the sympathy which their brethren desired to ex-

tend to the Roman catholics in their perplexity and disquieting situation. These few openly, everywhere, and on all occasions, expressed pleasure and satisfaction at the discomfiture of those whom they continued to designate as papists and enemies. Every opportunity, indeed, they seized to indulge in the most virulent and disingenuous abuse.

The low-church party, as they were called, which had at this time dwindled to a very small and insignificant number, without influence or authority of any moment, declared that what was happening was only another way adopted by the pope and his advisers for reconciling the whole Anglican communion to the Roman See. They represented that as we had long resisted his tyranny, he took another policy and professed to become friends. At a time, indeed, when Romanism was, from what had happened, fast disappearing from the country, they declared it was surely and steadily coming in. As if to expose his inconsistency the more, a certain bishop of Cranesbury, which populous city, in the extension of

the Episcopate, had been created a new See, affirmed without hesitation that it was a bad day for England when the interdict of Sixtus was worn out, and that he would daily pray for the sake of Protestantism that another interdict might speedily be pronounced: in his opinion, no good could come from its withdrawal: it was nothing but a pretence, and showed on all sides of it, without exception, the distinct mark of the beast.

Leaving out the few of this small and insignificant section, all the country was rejoicing at the fast approaching Unity of the Church.

The bishops of the Roman communion in England, after many and protracted conferences, resolved, at length, that their proper course was to show no resistance to the pope's authority and instructions.

Their last act of allegiance would be a loyal acceptance of the new position he had himself occasioned, and with him would rest the responsibility of it.

They would treat the interdict as worn out.

They would frankly admit that a course of three hundred years had exhausted its virtue.

As bishops in England, if they felt they could accept the œconomy of the Anglican Church, wide and full and accommodating as it was, and inclining as it is every day to become as comprehensive as possible, maintaining, nevertheless, all the essentials of the Catholic Church, it was open to them to hold, like retired colonial bishops, preferment at home; and they considered in such a case they might be useful where they were, still exercising all the functions of their office in communion with the Anglican bishops of each diocese.

They might aspire, perhaps, the younger of them thought, to the promotion of bishop in the Church of England itself, if in the future a prime minister should be found with courage enough to make such a nomination for the purpose of cementing together more closely the two communions, which had so recently become one under such peculiar circumstances.

The policy might be deemed popular they thought. Altogether, on reflection, the position did not seem to be so discouraging and disadvantageous as at first sight it appeared. Corners and rough edges might soon be found to be rubbing down; and after the passing of a few years, there might be expected perfect peace and agreement.

As to the Roman priesthood, who till now had held charges in numerous and various parts of the country, especially in the great manufacturing districts, superintending chiefly the Irish population in quarters of the most destitute portions of the towns, what was to hinder the conversion of their chapels into parish churches with a defined area in each district appropriated to a separate charge? The powers acquired by the National Church, for this good purpose, under Acts of Parliament which had been some years in operation, would avail for this. Church extension was still much needed in many parts of the country, and if this course were taken, no doubt endowment in every case would be forthcoming, and the more readily

because funds would not in every case be required for the erection of a church.

The prospect they regarded as both hopeful and inviting.

With the exception of the metropolis and a few of the more prominent cities of England, the condition of the Roman priest in point of temporalities was by no means prosperous or enviable.

The prospective change in this respect would be marked and most acceptable, if only the acquired stipend should secure an equality with the endowments received by the worst paid of the English clergy.

Curacies, moreover, were abundant in the Anglican Church, at a very handsome remuneration, far exceeding the average of stipends in the communion they would leave.

Their orders had always been admitted by the Church of England.

Indeed, apart from all prejudice, reflection seemed to show that the road was easy from Rome to England, and plain enough to prevent the change from seeming at all violent or unreasonable.

Soon the movement, canvassed as it had been publicly and everywhere, was in full operation, arising out of these circumstances and considerations.

The persons whom it most concerned were not deterred or discouraged by the hesitation of a few malcontents who struggled to remain in the communion which so many were leaving, nor by the splenetic bark of the suspicious low-churchmen, whose mortification disturbed no one. England was fast gathering into one communion and fellowship.

The prayer for unity which had been so long offered was finding an answer on all sides.

Non-conformists of all denominations were discovering that, within the fold of the Anglican Church, they could find a sure and happy resting-place. In their separation which was passing off they had found, through long years, an unvarying moderation distinguishing every action of the Church in its communion with the sects surrounding her: and they found hope and confidence in all this.

Infidelity, agnosticism, and all the narrow

philosophies which for a few years had struggled to find a footing in England, had been long and fast disappearing, and the country was again becoming a land of faith.

True religion, with all its happy influences and results, flourished in a degree which no history has recorded of former times.

Unity was again within sight of the Western Church, and a few years would see it consolidated.

Mr. Bell, the vicar of Northfield, was at the house of Mr. Talbot, by special invitation, to confer with Mr. Robertson and a few other influential parishioners on a subject involving the welfare of the town in an important particular. Mr. Wilkinson, the Roman Catholic priest of the small chapel in Eastgate, had intimated his desire, in the new condition of things, to be reconciled to the Church of England and to join her communion. The meeting was to discuss how this desirable result was to be best promoted and secured. The friends had met together at the instance of Mr. Talbot, to whom the communication on

the part of Mr. Wilkinson had first been made. Mr. Wilkinson was not himself present.

“I have been expecting this for some little time, gentlemen,” began Mr. Talbot, addressing his friends. “Mr. Wilkinson, as you know, has often been brought into close intercourse with me from the circumstance of the population among whom he works being in near proximity to my factory. I had much preferred his addressing Mr. Bell in the first instance, but no doubt we can all understand and appreciate his diffidence, though we know he would have met only with a kind and sympathizing reception.”

“Naturally, I would do all I could,” observed Mr. Bell, “to promote so desirable an end. Mr. Wilkinson is much respected in the district in which he lives. His work has been entirely among the poor and most destitute in the parish, chiefly Irish, and he has shown great devotion and self-sacrifice for a good many years, to which I give my cheerful testimony. He will make a valuable co-adjutor in any communion. Did he say, Mr. Talbot,

that he wished to be employed in our church, or only to enter it without reference to his orders ? ”

“ I quite think he desired work,” Mr. Talbot answered. “ Indeed I can have no doubt of it, for he said, I now remember, he hoped you would not object to his remaining in the district, and that the bishop would not insist in his removal elsewhere.”

“ The bishop,” interposed Mr. Robertson, “ must undoubtedly be consulted. We can do nothing without the bishop. If Mr. Wilkinson remains, which it seems desirable he should, we must learn from our bishop what his lordship requires, that no unforeseen difficulties may arise.”

Mr. Harrison, another parishoner who was present and had not yet spoken, briefly remarked that “ from what they all knew of the bishop, he was not likely to raise any objections if the vicar did not. It was clearly a matter which most of all concerned the vicar in the practical care of his parish.”

“ I understand the vicar to say,” observed

Mr. Robertson, "that he will make the way as easy and comfortable as it is possible. I suppose, Vicar," he continued, addressing Mr. Bell, "Mr. Wilkinson will not be required to make any public recantation of his errors in the face of the Church."

"Nothing of the sort, Robertson," replied the vicar. "The bishops, with one exception, throughout the country, have all agreed, and our bishop is not that exception, that no public renunciation of errors shall be demanded. They are of opinion that these reconciliations, which may take place, are totally different from cases which may have occurred prior to this general movement. And, for myself, I rejoice that Mr. Wilkinson has made up his mind to remain with us. He will always, I trust, find in me a considerate friend, and whatever I can do to promote his welfare will be most willingly done."

"An endowment," remarked Mr. Talbot, "should be provided for the chapel. I apprehend there is none. Can any gentleman present enlighten us on this point?"

"No endowment, I know," interposed a Mr. Jones. "Mr. Wilkinson has had help from friends, who have been long aware how pinched his income is, depending entirely on the weekly offerings of his people, and seldom exceeding twenty or twenty-five pounds a-year."

"He will find his position in our Church," remarked Mr. Robertson, "very different."

"I am prepared, Mr. Vicar and friends," said Mr. Talbot, "if the chapel be transferred to the Church of England, to give ten thousand pounds for endowment, and I only ask that the people of Northfield shall find or raise a sum of money, not less than five thousand pounds, for enlarging and converting the building into a fit and proper church. A new and independent parish should be at once constituted, embracing the district in which the chapel stands—a concession which I well know our good vicar will make no difficulty in granting."

Mr. Bell bowed assent.

All the gentlemen present were full of thanks to Mr. Talbot for his proffered gene-

rosity, and nearly the whole of the five thousand pounds required for the proposed church was quickly subscribed in the room.

"I take it," said Mr. Talbot, "no question will arise as to consecration. As the building, when finished, will be new, its consecration will be a matter of course, so that the bishop's sentence will secure the building for the use of the Church for ever."

"Mr. Wilkinson may wish that his present chapel should form the chancel of the new church," Mr. Jones remarked. "I think he should himself be consulted on these points and other details. For my part, I should wish to make him feel as little embarrassed as possible by his new position, and I am sure all who are with us here entertain no other wish."

"Things shall go nicely and smoothly, certainly," said Mr. Talbot. "I am hopeful this movement will be attended with great good, and marked success throughout the country."

Mr. Harrison again took up the conversation. He said, "he would propose, as representing

the friends and subscribers present, that Mr. Bell, the vicar, Mr. Talbot and Mr. Robertson, be requested to wait on Mr. Wilkinson, as soon as convenient, to report the friendly proceedings of that morning. He felt with them all that under the very peculiar circumstances which were now developing all over the country, that as little publicity as possible should be allowed, and, certainly, that all fuss should be avoided. Proceedings elsewhere of the nature with which they had been dealing have carefully been kept out of the papers. They lost the advantages which generally flow out of the influence of good example and precedent; but he felt, before all things, that the greatest consideration was due to the feelings of the Roman clergy, and that no violence in any way should be done them."

The gentlemen named cheerfully assented to the proposal made by Mr. Harrison, and the party separated congratulating one another heartily on the success of their little plan.

Mr. Bell and Mr. Robertson remained behind for a few minutes with Mr. Talbot, to

arrange a time that would be convenient to them all to wait on Mr. Wilkinson.

In a few days they all went to Mr. Wilkinson and related to him what was proposed to be done. They had his most cordial and thankful acknowledgments, and his assurance that the future closer association with them all was a reflection to him full of satisfaction.

Such was one of the first fruits of the Unity which was being consolidated, and it was full of the brightest omens of happiness and peace.





CHAPTER XVIII.

A FAREWELL.

News daily reached the inmates of Roscott of the reconciliation in large numbers of Roman Catholics to the Anglican communion.

The aged cardinal, who had been so long the light and guide of this religious house, was seriously shaken in health through the events which were occurring, and his strength manifestly was gradually giving way.

It had been several times a question with his attendants whether the last offices of the Church should not be offered him ; but retaining his full consciousness, as they saw he did, they refrained from suggesting the subject to him.

Many friends made acquainted by letter of his precarious condition visited him, to receive his blessing and take a last farewell.

But Workington had not come. All who had visited the cardinal were of the Roman communion, but he much desired a further interview with his lay friend, to whom, on enquiry, he found no intimation of his indisposition had been sent. He at once gave directions to the effect that he should be summoned, certain that he would not slight the dying cardinal's desire. The next day brought Workington to the college. He was an early visitor as requested.

The cardinal took his hand and held it for some minutes before speaking.

At last he said, "Dear old friend, I have been longing to see you. How much have I not thought of our last interview and conversation, and of all the maxims you so well laid down with reference to separating from a National Church. I am near my end as you must perceive. I think not to live many days."

"Nay, my dear cardinal," remarked Workington, in as hopeful a voice as he could frame, "advanced as your years are, you may yet be spared for some time to come. Many have lived beyond the years you have reached."

"Don't speak of it," rejoined the cardinal, "don't speak of it. Can anything be more improbable? In goodness and out of consideration for our infirmities, it is given us to be sensible when our end is approaching. I cannot wish to live. My life has been completed since the receipt of the papal missive—that ended it—what mistakes do we not make? Your conclusions respecting separation, as I have just said, furnish a golden rule for our guidance which has been too much disregarded in these days of unsettlement and change;" and thus ended, he sunk back exhausted in his chair.

"I fatigue you," Workington whispered, "let us sit in silence for a time, or leave it to me to speak, while you sit quiet and rest," and Workington, deeply affected by the scene, sank on one knee, as he took the cardinal's hand to press it in his own.

"Are you going to pray?" asked the cardinal, "I see you are on your knee. There is an English prayer book into which I have been looking, though laid aside so many years. All the collects the same as ours, only in the vernacular. There is one which we have not, but which is there at my mark. I wish you to pray it with me. I have read it again and again. I have strength to join you in it. See," he added, opening the book where he had placed the mark, "I have set against it a large cross, for it embraces the very essence of Christ's faith. Say it, dear friend, say it. It brings one comfort and peace. Would that I had never lost sight of it so long."

Mr. Workington took the opened book and read the prayer to which the cardinal had pointed.

A PRAYER FOR UNITY.

"O GOD, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Saviour, the Prince of Peace, give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions.

Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly union and concord ; that as there is but one Body and one Spirit, and one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may henceforth be all of one heart and one soul, united in one holy bond of Truth and Peace, of Faith and Charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN."

"Amen," repeated the cardinal in a solemn but feeble whisper, and closed his eyes.

But for the quivering motion of his lips, one might have thought his spirit had passed.

Mr. Workington was about to summon the attendants, but as he rose for this purpose from his seat, the cardinal said :

"You have refreshed my spirit, dear friend, more than I can tell you. How beautiful is not that prayer, so sublime and truly catholic. Tillotson's, I think. The National Church has indeed had great champions. It has nobly

played its part in the world. The Reformation did not protestantize it. Its future will be greater still."

He paused again, breathing feebly and heavily.

Mr. Workington, to insure the cardinal speaking as little as possible, talked of all that had occupied their thoughts when they were last together. He, too, praised the "Prayer for Unity," and remarked that it had been his habit continually to use it. He openly avowed the erroneous position of the non-conformists in a country whose Church was so tolerant of differences, and expressed a hope that such further concessions might be made with regard to latitude of ritual, that all excuses for separate communions might be removed. The non-conformists, he thought, were not altogether indisposed to accept the authority of the National Church.

"Episcopal orders," said the cardinal, interested in Mr. Workington's remarks, "are the great stumbling-blocks;" and again he remained silent.

“But,” remarked Mr. Workington, renewing the subject after a few minutes, “liberty of prophesying would set that right. I see no fundamental reason why laymen should not preach; and if preach, offer up prayers also in public if occasion required it. Some object to the continual use of a formal liturgy, having not yet realized the perfect sublimity of the Prayer Book in its simplicity and comprehensiveness—a sublimity which grows on one, I have always found, by making the use of it continual. We do not quarrel with the repetition of day and night, or with the regularity with which the days, the weeks, the months, and seasons return. All in nature is in settled order and constant repetition of the same things. ‘One day telleth another, and one night certi-fieth another.’”

“As time goes on,” said the cardinal, apparently much revived, “prejudices will wear down and be removed. Men will see more fully the wonderful advantages of unity. The marked growth of unbelieving adversaries in this latter age is drawing men who have faith

together, and teaching them that their true strength in God is to be one, as the Son and the Father are one. You will perhaps, dear friend, leave me now ; but may I ask you to remain in the House if business or other engagements do not compel you to go ? ”

“It is my very anxious wish,” continued the cardinal, “to speak further for a short time with you, and not to bid you farewell till evening is closing in, when I must to my meditations, if strength permit. My friends will see to all your wants and comforts if you can stay, for we do not regard you as a stranger here.”

Workington signified that he would remain with pleasure. He was much moved to see the cardinal so low ; and calling the attendants he left the room, convinced that his aged friend was not far from his translation.

Towards evening, according to the cardinal’s desire, Workington returned to the sick room. He thought he discerned a marked change for the worse. Taking the cardinal’s hand in

his own, he tenderly asked him, "if he felt better?"

"No better, dear friend," he replied, "no better, but weaker—weaker rather," he continued, in a tremulous and very feeble whisper. "Do not go: retain my hand in yours: it comforts me."

At this moment the vesper bell began ringing. It seemed at once to take the cardinal's attention, and Workington felt that their conversation could not well be renewed.

The cardinal closed his eyes and appeared to collect himself for the service which was about to commence.

His chamber was purposely so near the chapel that he might hear the functions and the music.

The service proceeded, and now the "Ave Maria" was poured forth in a volume of soft harmonious sounds.

The mellow symphonies of the organ sent their soothing influences from earth to sky.

Too soon was the service over, and with it the soul of the cardinal sank into rest.

He made no utterance, but quietly passed as a child sinks to sleep on its mother's bosom.

Good Mr. Workington saw plainly that the end was approaching. He had fallen on his knees by the holy man's side, and as the spirit was departing, he repeated with slow and firm voice the words from the song of the aged Simeon, "Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word."

The attendants first came in to bid, as usual, their friend and principal good night. They found Mr. Workington in tears, his head bowed low on the arm of the chair of him who had just departed, and on his knees, as became the chamber of death. The news quickly spread through the college that the cardinal was no more, and was carried as quickly to the outward but indifferent world.

"Good bye, good bye," said Mr. Workington, as he left the remains, and made his way from the college to return to Polinghurst.

